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**Newport, Rhode Island**

**COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT STUDY OF THE NEWPORT  
POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS**

**September 15, 2006**

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**Newport Police And Fire Departments  
Comprehensive Assessment**

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## **A1– INTRODUCTION**

## **A1 – INTRODUCTION**

This report presents the results of an assessment of the Newport Police Department and the Newport Fire Department. It contains observations and recommendations relating to both departments' management, organization, and operations. In addition, the results of a survey of each department's employees are presented.

This introductory chapter briefly reviews the objectives and scope of the study and the methodology used to conduct it. It also presents the organization of this report.

### **OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE**

The objectives of the study were to:

- Assess the organizational structure of each department with respect to size, distribution of personnel, assignments, and internal allocation of personnel and other resources
- Analyze performance by section and division including quality review, quantity assessment (workload), and breadth of services
- Analyze fiscal performance including expenditure procedures, efficiencies, liabilities, effective management, and utilization of personnel and other resources
- Assess department management including direction, control, evaluation, communication, budgeting, and planning
- Examine and evaluate the delivery of services currently provided and identify the need for change, consolidation, and expansion
- Make recommendations for the sharing of services, elimination, reduction, and alteration in services, or the way they are delivered

### **APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY**

A range of quantitative and qualitative analytic methods was used to conduct this study. Interviews and briefings were held with the mayor and city council members, the city manager, the recently retired police chief, the fire chief, and 140 sworn and civilian police and fire department employees. (A total of 56 interviews were conducted with fire department employees and 84 interviews were conducted with police department employees.) Interviews were also held with leaders of the local chapters of the International Association of Fire Fighters and the Fraternal Order of Police. Employee surveys were also made available online to all police and fire department employees. Eighty-one police department and sixty-five fire department employees completed these surveys. In addition, three focus group discussions were facilitated with representatives of community organizations, housing and social service agencies, and local business organizations.

## **ARRANGEMENT OF THE REPORT**

This report is arranged into 13 chapters that are grouped into 6 parts and 2 appendices. The first part (Part A) provides an introduction to the report and its recommendations. The second and third parts (Parts B and C) discuss issues relating to the police and fire departments respectively. Part D discusses a number of issues that affect both the police and fire departments. Findings from the employee surveys are then presented in Part E. The final part (Part F) discusses staffing implications and implementation of the study recommendations.

<b>Section</b>	<b>Chapter</b>
<b>Part A</b>	<b>A1 – Introduction</b>
	<b>A2 – Executive Summary</b>
<b>Part B</b>	<b>B1 – Police Department Overview</b>
	<b>B2 – Issues Affecting The Entire Police Department</b>
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	<b>C2 – Issues Affecting The Entire Fire Department</b>
	<b>C3 – Issues Affecting Individual Fire Department Units</b>
<b>Part D</b>	<b>D1 – Issues Affecting Both The Police And Fire Departments</b>
<b>Part E</b>	<b>E1 – Police Department Employee Survey Results</b>
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<b>Part F</b>	<b>F1 – Staffing Implications</b>
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<b>Appendices</b>	<b>Appendix A – Police Department Employee Survey Instrument</b>
	<b>Appendix B – Fire Department Employee Survey Instrument</b>

## **A2 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## **A2 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This executive summary presents an overview of the findings detailed throughout this report. The findings presented in this chapter are based on the results of interviews with over 140 sworn and civilian police and fire department employees, interviews with leaders of the local chapters of the International Association of Fire Fighters and the Fraternal Order of Police, and focus group discussions with representatives of community organizations, housing and social service agencies, and local business organizations. Employee surveys were also made available online to all police and fire department employees. Eighty-one police department employees (75 percent of all department employees) and sixty-five fire department employees (66 percent of all department employees) completed these surveys.

The organization of this executive summary mirrors the organization of the entire report. The summary is divided into four sections: issues affecting the police department; issues affecting the fire department; issues affecting both the police and fire departments; and staffing implications.

### **A – ISSUES AFFECTING THE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

This discussion is divided into three parts – police department overview, issues affecting the entire police department, and issues affecting individual police department units.

#### **POLICE DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW**

The Newport Police Department is a highly dysfunctional organization, mired in internal conflict that has negatively affected all aspects of its organizational functioning and the services it provides to the citizens of Newport. In the past the Newport Police Department took pride in being considered one of the leading police agencies in the state of Rhode Island and in New England. Over the past five years, however, the department has lost its way – shifting its focus from providing excellent service to the community to a focus on internal issues. The department is characterized by poor employee morale at all levels, managerial micromanagement, intimidation, and a lack of clear direction and priorities. Currently department employees seem far more concerned with determining on which side of the internal battle their co-workers and supervisors sit than with ensuring Newport citizens receive high quality police services.

The current dysfunction that characterizes the police department stems in large part from the leadership style of the former police chief. Worse than being simply an ineffective leader the police chief exerted a negative influence on department operations and created a climate of distrust. Moreover, resistance to the chief's leadership – and the formation of competing groups who either supported or resisted his leadership – created the turmoil within the department that characterized much of his tenure. In three areas in particular – human resources practices, management practices, and labor relations – the chief's influence has proved most debilitating.

- **Human resources practices.** Reportedly, decisions related to promotion, transfer, assignments, discipline, and commendation were often made to reward allies and to punish opponents. Individuals who did not support the chief were often assigned to undesirable duties and denied promotion. Inequities in discipline and commendation were also widely reported. Officers who were viewed by the chief as allies would

receive immediate commendation while officers who were viewed as opponents would receive none – even when the officers had played a similar role in the same incident. Likewise, two officers with identical infractions might receive widely disparate discipline depending on whether or not they were allied with the chief. Allies might receive no discipline for the infraction while opponents might receive a lengthy suspension.

- **Management practices.** The chief had ineffective working relationships with his command staff. Captains and lieutenants within the department have been granted minimal decision making authority and where they do have the authority to make a decision have chosen instead to either defer to the chief or ignore the problem rather than risk a negative response and subsequent retaliation by the chief. Moreover, the lack of quantifiable performance measures, performance monitoring, and accountability has allowed poor performance to go unnoticed. Cases assigned to investigators have remained opened for years, citizens receive rude service, and units within the department have been stripped of resources based on personalities rather than need.
- **Labor relations.** The already poor relationship between the chief and the union for sworn officers, the Fraternal Order of Police, has been exacerbated by protracted, difficult contract negotiations between the union and the city of Newport. For the past several contract periods the city and union have been unable to come to a negotiated agreement and contracts have been decided through the arbitration process. These difficulties have only further stirred the pot of dissension and unhappiness in the department.

Concerns about department leadership, human resources practices, management practices, and labor relations dominate the minds of employees. These concerns have not only caused employee morale to plummet but, even worse, have created an environment in which many employees are marking time on each shift focused on professional survival rather than providing quality police services. Indeed, the internal strife that characterizes the police department contributes to a service delivery system that is deeply flawed. Citizens, business, and community leaders report that they often receive poor quality service marked by rude and condescending interactions, delayed response to calls, and a lack of follow-through on complaints and concerns. Quite honestly, the Newport Police Department does not provide the high level of service city leaders expect to be provided to Newport's citizens, businesses, and visitors.

This report's findings suggest that the Newport Police Department is at a crossroads. The recent retirement of the chief of police provides the city and the department the opportunity to revitalize the police department. However, by itself, the appointment of a new chief will do little to revitalize the department. A complete shift in the culture and operations of the department will be needed if the department is to again become one of the leading police agencies in Rhode Island. Since the city charter mandates that the chief must be selected from within the police department the new chief will have been a major player in the dysfunctional culture and operational practices that have permeated every aspect of the department. This new chief will therefore require a high level of support to survive the many challenges he will face in addressing the myriad needs of the department.

Once the new chief is appointed he must develop and implement a long-term plan designed to reverse the negative culture that permeates the department's current management and to strengthen its operations. Fully implementing these changes will require an ongoing commitment and patience from city leaders. Significant progress on some of these actions will likely not be achieved for several years. At the same time, however, city leaders, department leaders, and managers must also not accept the *status quo* blindly thinking the appointment of a new chief will make its troubles disappear and magically result in a harmonious work environment and a return to high quality service. The patience of city leaders with regard to the long-term transformation effort should be matched, therefore, with a sense of impatience and urgency that old ways of doing business will no longer be tolerated.

It should be remembered, however, that implementation efforts will be doomed to failure without strong leadership within the department and steadfast support from the city. Resources, resolve, consistency, and accountability will all be necessary to undo the damage that has been done to the police department and to build a new department worthy of the city of Newport and the citizens it serves.

## **ISSUES AFFECTING THE ENTIRE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

This section presents issues that affect more than one police department division or unit. Issues addressed include: leadership; shift in focus; planning and accountability; organization; training; human resources practices; and civilianization.

### **Leadership**

The appointment of a strong leader as chief of police is critical to any effort to revitalize the Newport Police Department. The city manager must be committed to selecting an individual to serve as chief who can repair the damaged relationships among department employees while driving systemic changes and increasing accountability. It is also critical that the city manager and city council make a commitment to providing the new chief and leadership team with the tools and coaching necessary to revitalize the department. External coaching provided by individuals who have experience addressing the many challenges the new chief will face will be critical to changing the culture and practices within the department. The support of external coaches will also be essential to the training and development of the new chief's command staff. In addition, over the long-term the council should consider amending the city charter to eliminate the requirement that the chief be selected from within the department.

### **Shift In Focus**

The primary focus of the Newport Police Department is to respond effectively to incidents that have already occurred. This focus is reflected both in how staff uses its time and how the department is organized. The preponderance of the time and effort of department staff is devoted to reacting to incidents that have already occurred rather than taking proactive steps to reduce incidents and prevent crime. The shift orientation of the patrol division also makes it difficult to develop and implement practical strategies to proactively address the needs of individual communities within Newport. At present, patrol managers (i.e., shift lieutenants) focus primarily on ensuring their shifts run smoothly.

The department should adopt a policing approach that appropriately balances proactive and reactive policing strategies. To make this shift the department should:

- Broaden its focus to include both proactive and reactive policing strategies
- Emphasize developing and implementing strategies to address the unique crime and policing issues of individual communities within the city
- Reorient the organization by, rather than organizing around shifts, adopting a geographic orientation and organizing around one of three geographic areas – north, central/downtown, and south
- Assign patrol managers responsibility for analyzing patterns and trends of crime within their sector, working with the community on specific initiatives and projects aimed at reducing and preventing crime in that sector, deploying patrol officers to address particular needs and problems in the sector, and supervising officers assigned across all three shifts to beats in their sector
- Change the rank of patrol managers responsible for a given sector to captain while discontinuing the current patrol lieutenant positions (which currently have responsibility for a single shift)

At present it would not be reasonable to hold sector managers (i.e., the recommended patrol captain positions) responsible for controlling crime in their sectors because, with the exception of community policing officers, the department provides no resources to support the development and implementation of proactive strategies to address crime problems. Three steps should be taken to address this deficiency:

- Establish a patrol support unit comprised of one sergeant and three officers
- Establish a civilian crime analyst position to provide the analytic capacity needed to support a geographic sector based approach to addressing crime
- Assign two additional detective positions to the narcotics/vice unit to increase the department's ability to proactively address narcotics and vice issues throughout the city

Reorienting the organizational structure will require decentralizing responsibility for some functions and activities (e.g., community policing) that are currently centralized. In particular, one community policing officer should be assigned to each sector manager (captain). In addition, each detective assigned to the general investigations unit should be assigned to a sector and have a “dotted line” reporting relationship to the sector manager.

### **Planning And Accountability**

The department has not engaged in any meaningful operational or strategic planning. Quantifiable goals that detail what the department hopes to accomplish in either the short-term or the long-term have not been established. Not surprisingly therefore no effort has been made to articulate plans and strategies to guide department operations. In addition, accountability is not an organizational value within the police department

and, as a result, the systems needed to support accountability have not been established. The system of retribution and reward – that has passed for accountability in the current organization – has been allowed to operate unimpeded in part because the department lacks the systems needed to support a more productive approach to accountability. Performance evaluation processes are generally weak and on-the-job performance is not considered when making promotional decisions. To address this issue, the department should implement operational and strategic planning processes and increase accountability.

## **Organization**

At present, only one position in the Newport Police Department – the police chief – is not represented by a union. Consequently, the managers the chief must rely on to implement the substantial changes recommended in this report may face conflicts in implementing the recommendations if the changes needed from a management perspective conflict with what is in the best interest of the union. In addition, the current selection process gives the chief little discretion to select the managers he most depends on to manage the department. This situation would be difficult in a well functioning police department – in a department needing fundamental change it is untenable.

To facilitate efforts to bring about needed change, the number of managers reporting to the chief that are not represented by the union should be increased. The department's overall organizational structure should be modified so that three managers who are out of the union lead the department's three main divisions.

## **Training**

The department's current approach to training is beset by a number of problems including the following:

- Lack of systems to assess training needs
- Lack of training for civilian staff
- Limited formal training for newly promoted sworn and civilian managers and supervisors
- Lack of training for members of the special response team (SRT)
- Limited ongoing training for officers who function as crime scene investigators
- Lack of expertise in training and education of the current training sergeant

Addressing the department's shortcomings as they relate to training should be given a high priority. A number of immediate steps must be taken to address the department's training needs. First, the new chief, command staff, and all supervisors and managers should be provided intensive training to ensure that they have the leadership and management skills needed to successfully implement this study's recommendations. Second, the sergeant assigned to oversee training should participate in the professional development needed to acquire training-related expertise and skills. Third, a training

plan that addresses the training needs of all sworn and civilian employees should be developed.

### **Human Resources Practices**

Department practices relating to promotions, appointments, transfers, recognition of exemplary performance, assignment of “six percent positions,”<sup>1</sup> and disciplinary action are flawed. In particular, these processes are widely perceived to be unfair and influenced by personal relationships with decision makers. Indeed, these processes have generated considerable turmoil within the police department over the past five years. Each of these important processes should be revamped with special attention being focused on ensuring the processes are transparent and fair.

In addition, the process for managing the amount of time sworn officers are off duty as a result of injuries in the line of duty should be strengthened. In particular, department leaders should work with the city’s human resources department and the city manager to address issues related to inter-local trust management of ILD and take steps to reduce delays in the approval of consultations, therapy, and surgery. The department should also strengthen its system for monitoring the status of employees who are on ILD leave and for transitioning those employees back to work.

### **Civilianization**

Four positions – Sergeant, Administrative Services - Property and Fleet; Captain, Administrative Services; Lieutenant, Administrative Services; and Officer, Inspectional Services – are currently held by sworn officers but could effectively be performed by civilians. Assigning civilians to perform the duties of these positions will reduce cost without reducing the quality of service performed.

## **ISSUES AFFECTING INDIVIDUAL POLICE DEPARTMENT UNITS**

This section presents management and operational issues that primarily affect one police department unit or office. The section is organized into four parts that correspond with each of the divisions and offices reporting to the chief of police: patrol; criminal investigations; internal affairs and inspections; and administrative services.

### **Patrol Division**

Six areas relating to patrol division management and operations are discussed in this section: patrol supervision; patrol staffing; patrol scheduling; patrol support unit; special response team; traffic enforcement; and crime scene investigations.

**Patrol supervision.** When the police department adopts a more geographic orientation the patrol lieutenants – who currently serve as shift leaders – will be replaced by patrol captains – each of whom will be responsible for one area of the city. When this

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<sup>1</sup> A number of officer positions including community policing officer, detective, and other administrative sworn positions (i.e., accreditation officers) are referred to as six percent positions because incumbents receive an additional six percent in salary when they are assigned to these positions.

transition has been completed patrol sergeants should assume responsibility as shift commanders. Two sergeants should be assigned to each patrol shift – one of whom should be designated as the officer in charge (OIC).

**Patrol staffing.** A small increase in patrol staffing is needed to ensure a prompt response to all calls for service. Currently, 41 patrol officers (including positions that are currently vacant) are assigned to the patrol division and are primarily responsible for responding to calls for service. However, 42 officers are needed if the current four day on and two day off wheel schedule continues to be employed.

**Patrol scheduling.** Currently, patrol officers are scheduled to work four days on and two days off. Analysis reveals, however, that if a more traditional five day on and two days off schedule were employed three fewer officers would be needed to ensure a prompt response to all calls for service.

**Patrol support unit.** Demand for police services in Newport is highest during the summer and early fall as the volume of calls for service increases significantly. The demand for police service increases significantly during evening and early morning hours each weekend, most notably from 5:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. on Thursday through Sunday/early Monday. During this time block calls for service increase by 59 percent over off-season levels as compared to an average 31 percent increase during other summer hours. The patrol support unit should be used during the peak season to provide the additional capacity needed during these hours. (As previously noted, during the off-season the one sergeant and three officers assigned to this unit should support proactive initiatives to address community needs.)

**Special response team.** Although the department has established a special response time this unit has not received the training it needs to be effective. Department leaders, along with the city manager, should weigh the benefits and costs associated with supporting its own team and make a decision to either disband the special response team or take the steps necessary to ensure the team is fully operational and effective. If the cost of maintaining the team is deemed to be greater than the benefits, the department should work to partner with neighboring communities by joining the already formed regional team.

**Traffic enforcement.** The department should make a number of changes in its approach to traffic enforcement. In particular, the department should eliminate the current traffic stop quota, focus the full attention of the traffic sergeant on traffic enforcement, strengthen the relationship between traffic sergeant and patrol officers, and aggressively enforce parking requirements throughout the year.

**Crime scene investigations.** The fact that responsibility for crime scene investigations is currently split between the patrol and criminal investigations divisions complicates efforts to effectively coordinate the department's overall approach to processing evidence at crime scenes and limits oversight and accountability. To address this problem, responsibility for crime scene investigation should be assigned to the patrol division. The detective position that serves as the lead crime scene investigator should be upgraded to sergeant and should report directly to the deputy chief. This sergeant should provide support, training, and indirect supervision to patrol officers who serve as crime scene investigators.

## **Criminal Investigations**

This section discusses opportunities to strengthen the general investigations unit by improving case assignment practices, more aggressively managing the detective work force, and ensuring appropriate supervision and oversight. A final subsection discusses division staffing needs.

**Case assignment.** Effective management of follow-up criminal investigations begins with the case assignment process. Limiting the cases that are assigned for follow-up investigation to those that warrant the investment of a detective's time (and the city's resources) ensures investigators focus their efforts on productive activities. Case assignment practices in Newport, however, divert detective attention from more productive activities in two ways. First, detectives devote considerable effort to investigating minor infractions that can better be handled in civil court. Second, case screening practices have not been implemented to ensure detectives focus on cases for which there is a reasonable likelihood the case can be solved. To address these issues the department should revamp its case assignment practices by ceasing to handle cases involving bounced checks and delinquent video rentals and by establishing a list of "solvability factors" and using these factors to determine what criminal cases should be assigned for follow-up investigation.

**Work force management.** In recent years, the conduct of follow-up investigations of criminal cases has not been aggressively managed. Detectives are not encouraged to close cases, unproductive investigative strategies have been allowed to persist, and productivity expectations have not been established. To address these issues, progress on cases should be reviewed at regular intervals, cases for which continued investigation is unlikely to be productive should be closed, and expectations for the productivity of investigators – in terms of the number of cases they clear (that is, solve through arrest or exception<sup>2</sup>) and the number of these cases that are accepted for prosecution – should be set. Investigators who do not achieve reasonably high levels of productivity should be reassigned.

**Organization.** To address the general investigations unit's need for supervision and to provide the oversight needed to strengthen investigative performance, a sergeant position should be established to lead the unit. This position, however, will have a reasonably small span of control and should, therefore, be expected to devote approximately 60 percent of his or her time to investigating cases.

**Staffing.** Criminal investigations division staffing should be realigned. The investigative position focused on investigating cold cases – which has not solved any cases in the past year – should be eliminated. One additional position can also be eliminated if one assumes that all detectives should be at least 75 percent as productive as the most productive investigator. Please note, however, that this represents a conservative assessment of investigator staffing needs. Eliminating the investigation of bounced checks and delinquent video rentals, establishing reasonable criteria for what cases should be investigated based on solvability, and working with detectives to improve their

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<sup>2</sup> The FBI allows a case to be reported as "cleared by exception" if the perpetrator has been identified but cannot be arrested due to factors outside the department's control (for example, the perpetrator has died or is in prison for another offense in another state).

productivity may make it possible to make further reductions in the staffing of the general investigation unit in the future.

### **Internal Affairs Office And Inspections Division**

This subsection discusses the need to restore the credibility of the internal affairs office and whether continuing to participate in the CALEA accreditation process is warranted.

**Internal affairs.** Over the past several years the internal affairs process has been viewed as suspect by members of the department due, in large part, to allegations of interference and micromanagement by the recently retired chief. In fact, a number of cases that involved complaints related to the chief or close friends and relatives of the chief were investigated by department staff when an outside investigation by the state police should have been requested. Community representatives share employee concerns about the internal affairs process. In interviews and focus groups a number of community members expressed significant concerns with the objectivity of this process.

The department should take aggressive action to restore the integrity of the internal affairs process. In particular, specific criteria need to be established that detail what matters will be investigated internally, when someone other than the internal affairs investigator will perform an internal investigation, and when a complaint or incident will be referred to an external investigator, such as the state police, for investigation. In addition criteria for contacting citizens who make complaints and notifying citizens of the results of an investigation and their appeal rights should be reviewed and strengthened.

**Accreditation.** Given the magnitude of the challenge the department faces in implementing the recommendations presented in this study continuing to focus limited resources on CALEA accreditation seems ill advised. The department's limited resources are better used addressing the myriad challenges the department currently faces. Pursuing reaccreditation will divert attention and focus from critical activities that need to occur over the next several years. The officer position assigned to CALEA should therefore be discontinued.

### **Administrative Services Division**

This section is divided into two parts: records unit, and research and development office.

**Records unit.** A number of recommendations are provided to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and customer service focus of the records unit. In particular, the name of the unit should be changed to the "records and payroll unit" to more accurately reflect the range of services the unit performs. In addition, one senior records clerk position should be upgraded to unit supervisor and be responsible for training, scheduling, and supervision of the unit's staff. At the same time, the role of one senior records clerk position should be changed to limit report review responsibility and to assume responsibility for off-duty employment. The unit's front desk should also be renovated and an additional customer service window added.

**Research and development office.** Given the budget constraints faced by the city of Newport, it is critical that the department renew the aggressive pursuit of grant funding. The research and development office should therefore renew its emphasis on obtaining grant funding. At the same time the office should also expand its role with regard to

budgeting and planning. To reflect its new role – and its importance to the department's success – the office should be renamed the planning and budget office.

## **B – ISSUES AFFECTING THE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

This discussion is divided into three parts – fire department overview, issues affecting the entire fire department, and issues affecting individual fire department units.

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW**

The Newport Fire Department is well regarded and is generally considered to provide good service. In focus groups and individual interviews business representatives, citizens, and community leaders consistently expressed satisfaction with both the quality of service provided and the customer service focus of fire department staff. This is particularly noteworthy given the increased enforcement responsibilities assigned to the fire department as a result of the new Rhode Island fire codes and regulations. Despite the fact that many business and home owners struggle with the financial burden these regulations have placed on them, their frustration with these regulations has not affected their view of the fire department. The fact that community representatives express admiration for the fire department at the same time they express frustration with the regulations the department is charged with enforcing stands as a testament to the department's customer service orientation.

While the department provides good service, the level of service provided can be even better. Most notably, the department's ability to respond effectively to emergencies can be enhanced by strengthening training and standardizing policies and procedures. In addition, while response times to incidents are good, department resources (e.g., personnel and apparatus) are not currently deployed to minimize the time required to get needed staff and equipment to incident scenes during fire or medical emergencies. In particular, by redeploying department resources and changing scheduling practices response times to the area of the city that has the highest number of incidents – the north end – can be reduced without materially affecting the level of service provided to other areas of the city. Additionally, the department currently lacks the resources to comply with increased state requirements relating to fire inspections and code enforcement. The fire marshal and his staff should be commended for their efforts to meet these requirements without adequate staffing but their progress to date has been analogous to "running in quicksand." Without additional resources it will be impossible for the department to meet state requirements.

The department also faces internal challenges. At present, a number of issues have increased frustration and lowered morale among department employees. While some of these issues are the unavoidable consequence of unsuccessful contract negotiations that have resulted in contracts being settled through the adversarial binding arbitration process, others relate to internal management issues. While these internal issues have not yet affected the quality of service provided to citizens they should not be allowed to fester. Implementing study recommendations will require that the fire chief shift his focus from dealing with external issues and resume active control over the day-to-day management of the fire department. Changing his focus is not only essential to the implementation of the plan presented in this report but will also re-establish the chief as

the department's leader and will address employee concerns that he has not been adequately involved in leading the department on a day-to-day basis.

## **ISSUES AFFECTING THE ENTIRE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

This section presents findings related to issues that affect the entire fire department. It is divided into eight sections: leadership; organization; accountability; scheduling; fire station location, apparatus, and staffing; daily schedule; training; and other issues affecting the department.

### **Leadership**

The fire chief is not an active, visible leader within the department and has not established a cohesive leadership team. Because state and federal mandates on the department have increased in recent years, the chief has been working to strike a balance between his internal and external responsibilities. As a result, the chief's internal responsibilities have been neglected. In addition, the fire chief and deputy fire chiefs are not viewed by members of the department as being a unified leadership team. This lack of unity is not surprising however given the lack of consistent and frequent communication between and among the chief and the deputy chiefs. To address these issues there is a need to both increase the visibility and involvement of the chief and establish a unified leadership team.

### **Organization**

The administrative captain not only supports the chief by managing budget, payroll, and serving as the department's liaison to city support services but also serves as acting chief in the chief's absence. In addition, the administrative captain represents the chief at statewide emergency management meetings and serves as an alternate to the chief as emergency management coordinator to the city. The role of this position should be expanded to ensure the chief has time to focus on managing day-to-day department operations. In particular, responsibility for most citywide emergency management coordination duties should be assigned to this position. The incumbent in this position should also coordinate all city homeland security issues, should be assigned responsibility for overseeing the department's grant and development activities, and should work with the city's finance department and fire department leadership to manage both budget development and implementation and grant development and monitoring. The position should be upgraded to assistant chief to reflect both its current and increased responsibilities.

### **Accountability**

A number of steps should be taken to strengthen accountability within the department. In particular, the department should undertake an operational planning process to identify realistic performance goals and objectives, develop and implement operational plans for achieving the goals that have been established, clearly articulate performance expectations for both individuals and squads, and establish mechanisms for monitoring performance. In addition, the department should begin to develop the systems and processes needed to monitor and report performance against goals. Performance management processes (e.g., performance evaluation and the promotional process) should also be strengthened to support individual accountability.

## **Scheduling**

The department is currently organized into four squads each of which is led by a deputy chief. Members of each squad work two consecutive 10-hour shifts (8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.) followed immediately by two consecutive 14-hour shifts (6:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m.) and then receive four consecutive days off. On average firefighters are scheduled to work 42 hours a week. A 24-hour shift schedule – the schedule employed by the preponderance of fire departments across the nation – is, however, a much more effective way to schedule department staff. Under such a schedule firefighters would work one 24-hour shift followed by two days off. Employees will benefit from such a schedule because they will need to report to work fewer days each month. The department benefits because squad members will be scheduled to work 56 hours a week as opposed to the current 42 and therefore staffing requirements are reduced.

Adopting the 24-hour shift schedule will also enable the department to avoid the overtime expenditures – approximately \$475,000 per year – currently required to ensure that minimum staffing levels are met. (The number of staff the department currently employs is not sufficient to ensure contractual minimum staffing levels are achieved without overtime.) However, if the 24-hour shift schedule is not adopted, eight additional positions will need to be established to ensure contractually mandated staffing levels are adhered to.

## **Station Location, Apparatus, And Staffing**

Fire suppression apparatus and staff are currently deployed from three fire stations. These fire stations are located at the following addresses:

Station	Address
Station One	21 Marlborough Street
Station Two	100 Old Fort Road
Station Five	Touro Street

On each shift, 19 firefighters staff a total of eight apparatus (plus the deputy chief's car) at these stations as follows:

Station	Apparatus
Station One	Pumper (3 person) Ladder truck (2 person) Rescue vehicle (2 person) Car (Deputy Chief)
Station Two	Pumper (3 person) Ladder truck (2 person) Rescue vehicle (2 person)
Station Five	Pumper (3 person) Water Supply Pumper (1 person)

The current locations of the fire department's three stations and the configuration of staff deployed on each apparatus prevents the city from making the most effective use of its emergency response resources. Station One – the headquarter station – and Station Five are located too close together. As a result much of the central area of the city is protected by more than one pumper while the north and south ends of the city cannot be reached by a pumper within four minutes. (Pumpers operated by the U.S. Navy with which the department has a mutual aid agreement, however, can reach the area in the south end of the city quickly.) The time required to respond to rescue calls in the north end of the city is also longer than for other areas of the city. In addition, the department's current practice of pairing a ladder truck staffed with two people and a rescue vehicle that is also staffed with two people to serve as a four-person ladder crew at a working fire makes training more difficult. Indeed, the ability for the ladder crew to train together as a team is limited because rescue vehicles are often unavailable for training because they are responding to calls. Moreover, if a ladder truck responds to a working fire while the rescue vehicle with which it is paired is responding to another call, it will need to rely on a rescue unit from another station to form a team at the working fire despite the fact that it would not have had the opportunity to train with the crew assigned to that rescue vehicle.

To address these issues, the city should build a new fire station in the northern section of the city and relocate Station Five to that site. The pumper (currently located at the old Station Five) and a rescue vehicle (currently assigned to Station One) should be deployed from this new station. In addition, one additional staff person should be assigned to the ladder company at Station Two. The following table summarizes the recommended deployment of apparatus and personnel.

Station	Apparatus/Staffing	Station Staffing Per Squad
Station One	Deputy Chief Three-person Pumper Two-person Ladder One-person Water Supply Pumper	7
Station Two	Three-person Pumper Three-person Ladder Two-person Rescue	8
Station Five (relocated)	Three-person Pumper Two-person Rescue	5

This new configuration creates a number of benefits. Fire suppression and response to life threatening medical emergencies<sup>3</sup> in the north end of the city – which has the highest number of calls – will be significantly enhanced. In addition, deploying a rescue unit at the relocated Station Five will reduce response times in the north end of the city while still providing adequate coverage to the central area of the city. Indeed, most of the central area of the city will still be able to be reached by a rescue unit within six minutes.

<sup>3</sup> Pumpers currently are deployed to respond to life-threatening medical emergencies.

In addition, overlap in the areas of first due pumper response within four minutes will be reduced. Training and response will be enhanced for the staff assigned to the Station Two ladder truck that serves as the department's primary technical rescue team. This apparatus will be staffed with three firefighters and will not depend on the rescue for staffing. Training and response for the firefighters assigned to the Station One ladder truck will also be improved, as this truck will be paired with the water-supply pumper. This pumper is deployed on fewer calls than a rescue unit so the firefighter assigned to this vehicle will have ample time to train with the staff assigned to the Station One ladder truck.

Implementing these recommendations will substantially improve the department's ability to respond quickly and effectively to all areas of the city. To achieve these benefits minimum staffing on each squad should be increased by one – from 19 to 20. If the 24-hour shift schedule is adopted, however, no additional firefighter positions will need to be established. Under the three squad 24-hour schedule, 26 positions will need to be assigned to each squad for a total of 78 firefighter positions (or 10 positions fewer than the number currently deployed).<sup>4</sup>

### **Daily Schedule**

The daily work schedule for firefighters when they work the 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. is not structured and does not allocate sufficient time for training and for pre-fire planning. Staff are provided excessive free time ostensibly to work out or study but there is no accountability for how they use this time. The work schedule during the day shift also devotes excessive time to cleaning the facility and not enough time to training. Even less structure is provided to the evening/night shift schedule. Indeed, there is no daily schedule during the 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. shift. On the contrary, no work or training (other than responding to emergencies) is expected except when there is a probationary firefighter on the squad to train. To address this issue, the daily schedule on both the day and evening shifts should be restructured to increase training time and provide regularly scheduled time for pre-fire planning and proactive inspections in the community. These activities should be scheduled during both day and evening shifts.

### **Training**

The department has not devoted the time, attention, or resources needed to ensure firefighters and their managers and supervisors receive necessary training. First, the department has not established a consistent approach to training. Second, the department has also not developed standard operating guidelines for technical rescue, boat rescue, or jet ski rescue. In addition, very little training is provided for new recruits. In fact, recruits average only two weeks of training prior to being counted as part of the regular shift staffing.

The department should take a number of steps to improve all aspects of department training. As a first step the department should establish systems and processes for determining what competencies are expected of firefighters and apparatus crews and develop approaches to determine whether these competencies have been achieved. In

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<sup>4</sup> This analysis considers only the number of staff needed for emergency response. The one position that is deployed on each shift to provide dispatch services is excluded.

addition, the department should develop standardized operating guidelines on technical rescue skills and ensure staff in each squad and in each station are trained and demonstrate competency on these procedures. Once clear expectations for what the department hopes to achieve through its training efforts have been established training programs for new recruits, veteran firefighters, and managers and supervisors should be implemented. To ensure each firefighter receives all necessary training it is also essential that training records be automated and all training systematically tracked. Given the immediate, high priority need to develop a formal training program an officer should be temporarily reassigned to serve as training officer.

### **Other Issues Affecting The Department**

Several other issues and resulting recommendations were identified during the course of this study. These issues relate to: National Incident Management System (NIMS) training; firefighter call back; radio interference; and use of the incident command system.

**National Incident Management System (NIMS) training.** On April 13, 2005, the Newport City Council, by council resolution, adopted the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as the city's standard for incident management. Adopting NIMS made the city eligible to access homeland security funding and apply for funding through the Fire Act Grant. Although the department has received funding from both sources it has not fulfilled the obligations that came with adopting NIMS. Staff from the fire and police departments and the city management staff have not been trained to implement NIMS as required. If this mandated training is not completed and well documented the fire department risks losing the federal grant dollars it has received. The department and city should therefore place a high priority on ensuring that the mandated NIMS training is provided.

**Firefighter call back.** Currently when firefighters need to be called back to duty due to a major emergency the department notifies them by using an air horn located on the roof of Station One (the headquarter station). Not only is this air horn unreliable, but also because there is no requirement that firefighters live in the city the air horn is not an effective method for calling firefighters to duty. The department should therefore develop a more reliable method of calling firefighters back to duty. Pager systems are typically effective for this purpose.

**Radio interference.** Many buildings that have recently been constructed in the city use materials that interfere with communication between and among other mobile radios and the emergency communications (dispatch) center. This problem should be addressed by passing a city ordinance that requires contractors to install radio repeater systems during the construction of such buildings. The city and department should also work with owners of recently constructed buildings to rectify situations where the materials used in construction hinder effective communication.

**Use of the incident command system.** Although the fire department has a long history of using an incident command system (ICS) in interviews staff indicated that the department does not consistently make effective use of this system during incidents. Command staff appears to view use of ICS as an option rather than a mandate. The use of ICS on all incidents should be a directive from the chief. In addition, significant time should be dedicated to training all personnel in the use of this system.

## **ISSUES AFFECTING INDIVIDUAL FIRE DEPARTMENT UNITS**

This section presents managerial and operational issues that affect the department's fire prevention bureau. This chapter is organized into three parts: staffing, office space, and technology.

### **STAFFING**

The workload of the fire prevention bureau has increased exponentially over the past two years due to the increased rules and regulations instituted by the state of Rhode Island in response to the Station Nightclub fire. To address this increased mandated workload staffing of the fire prevention bureau should be substantially increased. Seven additional positions – or more than double the number currently assigned to the bureau – are needed to meet the increased workload requirements resulting from mandates that have been incorporated into the state fire code.

### **OFFICE SPACE**

The fire prevention bureau is housed on the first floor of Station One (the headquarter station). The current space is cramped – there is barely enough room to hold desks and chairs for the six staff currently assigned to the bureau. In addition, the space is in poor repair – it has poor ventilation, chipped and peeling paint, flooring that needs to be replaced, and lacks adequate electrical power to support needed technology. Moreover, because there is insufficient space to store building plans and records, plans are currently stored on desks, on top of and behind cabinets, and stuffed in corners behind furniture. In addition, the bureau office is ill equipped to serve the public despite the fact that the space is regularly used to serve customers. To address this issue the fire prevention bureau should be relocated to new office space that includes a reception/waiting area, adequate working space for each assigned staff, a private meeting space, and adequate storage space for plans and records. In the short-term the department, with the city, should identify space in another city owned building or rent space. Over the long-term, when Station Five is relocated either the current Station Five could be renovated to house the bureau or new bureau offices could be constructed as part of the new Station Five.

### **TECHNOLOGY**

Computer support for the fire prevention bureau is not adequate. The computers currently assigned to the bureau are out-of-date, are in frequent disrepair, and lack the capacity to manage software that would streamline operations. In fact, staff report using personal computers to complete their work because the computers supplied by the department do not meet their needs. In addition, not enough computers are assigned to the unit. Furthermore, the bureau has not been provided with needed copiers, printers, and scanners and the equipment that has been provided is not designed to handle the volume of work the bureau generates.

To address these issues, bureau technology should be substantially improved. At a minimum, each employee assigned to the fire prevention bureau should be provided with an individual computer. In addition, the bureau should be equipped with a large commercial printer that has the capacity to print oversized documents and plans. The

office should also be equipped with a commercial scanner that bureau staff can use to scan plans and create an electronic database of building plans.

## **C - ISSUES AFFECTING BOTH THE POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS**

This section discusses issues that affect both the police and fire departments. The chapter is divided into two parts: information technology and emergency communications.

### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

The city has not taken an integrated approach to addressing the information technology needs of the police and fire departments. For the most part, each department has worked independently in seeking the financial resources, including grants, needed to purchase hardware and software. They have received minimal support from the city's management information services (MIS) office and instead rely on their own staff to meet the information technology needs of their departments. For its part, the city's MIS office has lacked a basic understanding of the technology needs of its public safety departments and has made no effort to ensure systems are compatible and can be integrated.

While the police department has assigned a position to serve as the department's technology manager (a retired sworn employee) the fire department is dependent on firefighters who have personal interest in technology and through reading and research have developed some basic skills to address the department's technology needs. Both departments suffer from a lack of the on-site information technology expertise needed to support current software and hardware, drive decisions regarding future information technology purchases and contracts and most importantly, advocate and communicate with hardware and software vendors to ensure the needs of both departments are met.

As the hardware and software used by both departments continue to increase in both complexity and volume there is a need for a high level of support to ensure the needs of both departments are met and that effective use is made of the city's resources as new hardware and software systems are implemented. To address this need, a public safety information technology director position should be created. This position should report directly to the city's director of management information systems but should have a dotted line reporting relationship to both the fire and police chiefs. The position should be charged with approving and overseeing the purchase, installation, upgrading, and maintenance of all hardware and software in both the fire and police departments. In addition, this position should be assigned responsibility for the ongoing management and support of the information technology infrastructure in both departments.

### **EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS**

This section is divided into four parts: consolidation; policies and procedures; training and supervision; and staffing.

#### **Consolidation**

Operating two separate systems for police and fire emergency communications increases costs, impedes communications, and limits the city's ability to leverage

expertise across the two departments. One integrated public safety communications unit should therefore provide emergency communication services for the police and fire departments. The unit should be comprised of civilian dispatchers who are trained to take calls and dispatch police, fire and rescue and should be housed in police department headquarters.

### **Policies And Procedures**

In both the police and fire departments there is significant variation in how personnel are deployed to similar types of calls. To address this issue a committee of staff from both the departments should be assembled and charged with developing protocols with regard to how many personnel and apparatus should typically be dispatched to an incident of a given type. The supervisor of the emergency communications center should then be charged with ensuring that these protocols are consistently implemented.

### **Training And Supervision**

Training and supervision of police and fire dispatchers is not adequate. Both police and fire department dispatchers receive inconsistent supervision and training. To increase supervision and training one dispatcher position on each shift should be upgraded to lead dispatcher and should be responsible for training new dispatchers and serve as a working supervisor on the shift. Both a formal orientation and competency training program for all new dispatchers and an annual in-service training program for veteran dispatchers should be developed. The department should also ensure that all dispatchers become emergency medical dispatch (EMD) certified.

### **Staffing**

Insufficient positions are currently assigned to ensure that when a call is made to 911 or the city's emergency telephone number a dispatcher is available to take that call and that sufficient dispatchers are employed to deploy staff and manage emergency radio communications. A total of 18 dispatcher positions are needed to ensure Newport citizens receive a high level of service. This represents an increase of four positions from the current nine police dispatchers and five full-time equivalent fire dispatchers. Three of these positions should serve as lead dispatchers and fifteen positions should be dispatchers.

## **D- STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

This report presents numerous recommendations to strengthen operational performance and improve efficiency and effectiveness of both the police and fire departments. The following table summarizes the staffing implications of implementing these recommendations for the police department, fire department, and public safety units serving both departments.

Department	Current	Recommended	Additional Positions Needed/(Positions To Be Reduced)
Police Department	99	102	3
Fire Department	93	91	(2)
Public Safety Information Technology	0	1	1
Public Safety Emergency Communications	14	20	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>8</b>

## **B1 – POLICE DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW**

## **B1 – POLICE DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW**

The Newport Police Department is a highly dysfunctional organization, mired in internal conflict that has negatively affected all aspects of its organizational functioning and the services it provides to the citizens of Newport. In the past the Newport Police Department took pride in being considered one of the leading police agencies in the state of Rhode Island and in New England. Over the past five years however the department has lost its way – shifting its focus from providing excellent service to the community to a focus on internal issues. The department is characterized by poor employee morale at all levels, managerial micromanagement, intimidation, and a lack of clear direction and priorities. Currently department employees seem far more concerned with determining on which side of the internal battle their co-workers and supervisors sit than with ensuring Newport citizens receive high quality police services.

The current dysfunction that characterizes the police department stems in large part from the leadership style of the former police chief. Worse than being simply an ineffective leader the police chief exerted a negative influence on department operations and created a climate of distrust. Moreover, resistance to the chief's leadership – and the formation of competing groups who either supported or resisted his leadership – created the turmoil within the department that characterized much of his tenure. In three areas in particular – human resources practices, management practices, and labor relations – the chief's influence has proved most debilitating.

- **Human resources practices.** Reportedly, decisions related to promotion, transfer, assignments, discipline, and commendation were often made to reward allies and to punish opponents. Individuals who did not support the chief were often assigned to undesirable duties and denied promotion. Inequities in discipline and commendation were also widely reported. Officers who were viewed by the chief as allies would receive immediate commendation while officers who were viewed as opponents would receive none – even when the officers had played a similar role in the same incident. Likewise, two officers with identical infractions might receive widely disparate discipline depending on whether or not they were allied with the chief. Allies might receive no discipline for the infraction while opponents might receive a lengthy suspension.
- **Management practices.** The chief had ineffective working relationships with his command staff. Captains and lieutenants within the department have been granted minimal decision making authority and where they do have the authority to make a decision have chosen instead to either defer to the chief or ignore the problem rather than risk a negative response and subsequent retaliation by the chief. Moreover, the lack of quantifiable performance measures, performance monitoring, and accountability has allowed poor performance to go unnoticed. Cases assigned to investigators have remained opened for years, citizens receive rude service, and units within the department have been stripped of resources based on personalities rather than need.
- **Labor relations.** The already poor relationship between the chief and the union for sworn officers, the Fraternal Order of Police, has been exacerbated by protracted, difficult contract negotiations between the union and the city of Newport. Unfortunately, for the past several contract periods the city and union have been

unable to come to a negotiated agreement and contracts have been decided through the arbitration process. These difficulties have only further stirred the pot of dissension and unhappiness in the department.

Concerns about department leadership, human resources and management practices, and labor relations dominate the minds of employees. These concerns have not only caused employee morale to plummet but, even worse, have created an environment in which many employees are marking time on each shift focused on professional survival rather than providing quality police services. Indeed, the internal strife that characterizes the police department contributes to a service delivery system that is deeply flawed. Citizens, business, and community leaders report that they often receive poor quality service marked by rude and condescending interactions, delayed response to calls, and a lack of follow-through on complaints and concerns. Quite honestly, the Newport Police Department does not provide the high level of service city leaders expect to be provided to Newport's citizens, businesses, and visitors.

This report's findings suggest that the Newport Police Department is at a crossroads. The recent retirement of the chief of police provides the city and the department the opportunity to revitalize the police department. However, by itself, the appointment of a new chief will do little to revitalize the department. A complete shift in the culture and operations of the department will be needed if the department is to again become one of the leading police agencies in Rhode Island. Since the city charter mandates that the chief must be selected from within the police department the new chief will have been a major player in the dysfunctional culture and operational practices that have permeated every aspect of the department. This new chief will therefore require a high level of support to survive the many challenges he will face in addressing the myriad needs of the department.

Once the new chief is appointed he must develop and implement a long-term plan designed to reverse the negative culture that permeates the department's current management and to strengthen its operations. In particular, over the long term the following steps should be taken to strengthen the department's performance:

- Set measurable goals for the department and develop strategic and operational plans to achieve these goals in the most efficient and effective manner possible
- Establish systems to hold individuals and units within the department accountable for achieving desired goals while also providing command staff and supervisors with the authority and resources needed to be successful
- Ensure the overall organizational structure of the police department, as well as the organization of individual units, facilitates efforts to achieve desired goals
- Establish high expectations for employee performance and ensure managers and supervisors are held accountable for ensuring their staff meet these expectations and for providing consequences to employees who do not meet these expectations
- Provide ongoing training to build needed skills and expertise among both sworn and civilian staff at all levels within the police department

- Develop approaches to building the management and leadership capacity needed to address the department's current and expected future needs

Fully implementing these steps will require an ongoing commitment and patience from city leaders. Significant progress on some of these actions will likely not be achieved for several years. At the same time, however, city leaders, department leaders, and managers must also not accept the *status quo* blindly thinking the appointment of a new chief will make its troubles disappear and magically result in a harmonious work environment and a return to high quality service. The patience of city leaders with regard to the long-term transformation effort should be matched, therefore, with a sense of impatience and urgency that old ways of doing business will no longer be tolerated. The following steps should therefore be undertaken in the short-term to jump start the transformation process:

- Select a police chief who can repair the damaged relationships among department employees while driving systemic changes and increasing accountability
- Provide the new chief and command staff with the support needed to renew the department's leadership
- Strengthen day-to-day supervision and management of employees
- Clearly communicate that high performance is expected from all employees each and every day
- Take steps to repair fractured relationships between the department's leadership and employee bargaining units
- Establish a core training program for all employees with specific focus on providing leadership and supervisory training to all sworn and civilian supervisors and managers, training new civilian employees, and meeting minimum training requirements for all specialty functions (SRT and CSI)
- Ensure that decisions relating to promotions and transfers are made based on criteria established in the current contract and that the reasons for these decisions are clearly communicated

It should be remembered, however, that implementation efforts will be doomed to failure without strong leadership within the department and steadfast support from the city. Resources, resolve, consistency, and accountability will all be necessary to undo the damage that has been done to the police department and to build a new department worthy of the city of Newport and the citizens it serves.

## **B2 – ISSUES AFFECTING THE ENTIRE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

## **B2 – ISSUES AFFECTING THE ENTIRE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

This chapter presents issues that affect more than one police department division or unit. The chapter is divided into seven sections: leadership; shift in focus; planning and accountability; organization; training; human resources practices; and civilianization.

### **A – LEADERSHIP**

#### **The Appointment Of A Strong Leader As Chief Of Police Is Critical To Any Effort To Revitalize The Newport Police Department**

The overview provided in Chapter B1 provides a detailed discussion of the poor leadership and turmoil that has characterized the police department over the past five years. To begin to reverse the damage inflicted on the department during this period it is critical that a strong leader be selected as police chief. The city manager must be committed to selecting an individual to serve as chief who can repair the damaged relationships among department employees while driving systemic changes and increasing accountability. It is also critical that the city manager and city council make a commitment to providing the new chief and his leadership team with the tools and coaching necessary to revitalize the department.

#### **The New Chief And Leadership Team Will Require External Support And Coaching**

Because the city charter currently requires that the police chief be selected from among the police department's existing sworn staff the new chief will have been part of the dysfunction that has characterized the department over the past five years. Providing the new chief and his command staff with external support will therefore be essential to renewing the department's leadership. External coaching provided by individuals who have experience addressing the many challenges the new chief will face will be critical to changing the culture and practices within the department. The support of external coaches will also be essential to the training and development of the new chief's command staff.

#### **Over The Long-Term The City Council Should Consider Amending The City Charter To Eliminate The Requirement That The Chief Be Selected From Within The Department**

The city charter currently limits the ability of the city manager to hire a police chief who is not a current member of the police department. This provision unnecessarily limits the ability of the city to select the best candidate for the position and can create an untenable situation where a candidate may be promoted to chief who does not have the necessary skills and experience simply because he is deemed the best internal candidate. As the department's recent history clearly indicates, selecting a police chief who is not qualified has the potential to compromise the quality of services provided to the citizens of Newport. Changing this requirement would not, of course, preclude the city from selecting an internal candidate. An internal candidate would only be selected though, if that person were the best available candidate for the position.

## **B – SHIFT IN FOCUS**

### **The Police Department's Current Approach To Providing Services Is Almost Exclusively Reactive**

The primary focus of the Newport Police Department is to respond effectively to incidents that have already occurred. This focus is reflected both in how staff uses its time and how the department is organized.

**Use of staff resources.** The preponderance of the time and effort of department staff is devoted to reacting to incidents that have already occurred rather than taking proactive steps to reduce incidents and prevent crime. The patrol division, for example, primarily focuses on responding to calls for service. Any time not spent responding to calls is largely unstructured. How that time is spent is generally left up to the discretion of individual patrol officers. Indeed, the only proactive services provided by the patrol division are delivered by the community policing unit. Likewise, the investigation division's primary focus is investigating reported crimes. In fact, the investigation division has only one unit that focuses primarily on proactive activities – the narcotics/vice unit – and that unit (which consists of four staff) has had its staffing reduced over the past two years.

**Organizational focus.** The shift orientation of the patrol division also makes it difficult to develop and implement practical strategies to proactively address the needs of individual communities within Newport. At present, patrol managers (i.e., shift lieutenants) focus primarily on ensuring their shifts run smoothly. Very little attention is currently focused on addressing crime patterns and trends and on addressing the unique needs of particular geographic areas of the city. Responsibility for dealing with and addressing the needs of individual communities within Newport has been left primarily to the community policing unit.

### **The Department Should Adopt A Policing Approach That Appropriately Balances Proactive And Reactive Policing Strategies**

The department's ability to substantially improve the level and quality of services it provides the citizens of Newport will be hampered if it does not broaden its focus to include both proactive and reactive policing strategies. Certainly, responding effectively to incidents that have occurred should continue to be a department priority. More emphasis, however, also needs to be placed on developing and implementing strategies to address the unique crime and policing issues of individual communities within the city and the unique needs created by the many special events hosted by the city of Newport. Rather than assigning responsibility for such efforts to individual units (e.g., the community policing unit and the narcotics/vice unit) the implementation of proactive strategies should be integrated into the department's overall operations.

Striking a more appropriate balance between proactive and reactive policing strategies while ensuring proactive initiatives are integrated into the overall operations of the department will require a reorientation of the organizational structure and the investment of resources to support proactive initiatives. A discussion of each of these elements follows.

**Reorient organization.** Broadening the focus of the department to incorporate proactive policing strategies focused on addressing the needs of individual communities and the special events that are hosted in Newport will require a fundamental reorientation of the organizational structure. In particular, in the patrol division, rather than organizing around shifts the department should adopt a geographic orientation. Establishing more of a geographic orientation to the department's structure will both improve accountability and refocus the department on the specific and varying needs of different sectors of the community. Accountability will be enhanced if authority for all police services (or at least for those services that can practically be decentralized) in a specified geographic area is assigned to an individual unit or manager. Moreover, because those managers will be focusing on a particular geographic area they will be in a good position to establish strong relationships with the community in that geographic area and to develop tailored policing strategies to address community needs.

To implement this change, the primary orientation of patrol leaders should change from a time of day orientation to a geographic orientation. Instead of being responsible for a shift sector managers would be responsible for addressing all the crime problems, response issues, and planning for and managing special events in one of three areas (or sectors) of the city – north, downtown/central, and south. The role these patrol managers play in each sector would be analogous to the role the current patrol captain plays for the entire city. Rather than simply assigning officers to a given beat and managing the shift, patrol managers would have responsibility for analyzing patterns and trends of crime within their sector, working with the community on specific initiatives and projects aimed at reducing and preventing crime in that sector, deploying patrol officers to address particular needs and problems in the sector, supervising officers assigned across all three shifts to beats in their sector and working with the deputy chief - patrol, other patrol sector captains, and the administrative services director in planning for and managing special events that impact the sector.

Broadening the responsibilities of these patrol managers will require changing the rank of these positions. Based on the recommended scope of responsibilities patrol managers responsible for a given sector should be assigned the rank of captain. The current patrol lieutenant positions – which presently have responsibility for a single shift – should be discontinued.

**Invest resources.** At present it would not be reasonable to hold sector managers (i.e., the recommended patrol captain positions) responsible for controlling crime in their sectors because, with the exception of community policing officers, the department provides no resources to support the development and implementation of proactive strategies to address crime problems. Indeed, in the past when additional resources have been requested to address a particular need the request has generally been denied because overtime is required to pay for the additional staffing and the overtime budget is limited.

Three steps should be taken to address this deficiency. First, a patrol support unit should be established. This unit, which should be comprised of one sergeant and three officers, should provide support for the proactive initiatives – led by sector captains – that can not be effectively handled by patrol officers who are also responsible for responding to calls. The leader of the patrol division should work with sector captains to determine how the patrol support unit's resources will be used most productively. (As discussed in more detail in Chapter B3 during the summer this unit will provide the

additional capacity needed to address seasonal workload issues.) Second, a civilian crime analyst position – reporting to the leader of the patrol division – should be established. This position is needed because the department currently lacks the analytic capacity to support a geographic sector based approach to addressing crime. None of the current supervisory or command staff have the skills, experience, or training to perform the critical analysis of criminal activity needed to drive priority setting and resource deployment. Without effective crime analysis the sector captains will lack the information needed to make sound decisions on how to deploy resources. Finally, two additional positions should be assigned to the narcotics/vice unit. Increasing the staffing of this unit will increase the department's ability to proactively address narcotics and vice issues throughout the city. In addition, these staff should be available when needed to support the implementation of proactive policing strategies developed by the recommended patrol sector captains.

### **Reorienting The Organization Structure Will Require That Some Functions And Activities Be Decentralized**

Reorienting the organizational structure will require decentralizing responsibility for some functions and activities (e.g., community policing) that are currently centralized. One community policing officer will be assigned to each sector manager (captain). In the recommended model, however, all patrol officers will be expected to practice community policing with a focus, when not responding to calls, on providing defined, proactive services based on identified sector needs. The role of the community policing officer, in this model, will be to support the captain in addressing the specific needs of the sector by performing activities that cannot practically be performed by patrol officers between calls. Such activities will include working proactively with schools, businesses, civic groups, and Newport citizens. Community policing officers will have only a very limited responsibility for responding to calls.

It is also essential that sector managers have a link to the resources assigned to investigate cases in their sector. To provide this link each detective assigned to the general investigations unit should have a dotted line organizational relationship to a sector manager and should, to the extent possible, be assigned cases in that sector. Establishing this dotted line reporting relationship will create a number of benefits. First, integrating general investigators into the overall operations of the sector will ensure investigators develop a sound understanding of crime trends and key actors in that community. In addition, because both the patrol captain and the general investigators assigned to the sector will be evaluated, in part, on their success in solving crime each will have a strong incentive to work together collaboratively. Encouraging patrol officers and investigators to work together collaboratively is especially important because, at present, patrol officers and detectives do not work together effectively. In interviews, patrol officers consistently raised concerns about a lack of follow through by detectives. Likewise, detectives consistently raised concerns about a lack of thoroughness of the preliminary investigations conducted by patrol officers.

### **Developing The Capacity To Focus More Attention On Proactive Policing Will Require Making A Number Of Changes To The Current Staffing Configuration**

Implementing these recommendations will require a number of staffing changes. The four patrol lieutenant positions that currently serve as shift managers should be discontinued and replaced by three captains – each of whom is responsible for one area

of the city. In addition, only three community policing officer positions – one reporting to each sector captain – will be needed so one community policing officer position and one community policing supervisor (sergeant) position should be discontinued. One civilian crime analyst position should also be established, as should a patrol support unit consisting of one sergeant and three police officers.

## **C – PLANNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

### **The Department Currently Does Not Engage In Strategic Or Operational Planning**

The department has not engaged in any meaningful operational or strategic planning. Quantifiable goals that detail what the department hopes to accomplish in either the short-term or the long-term have not been established. Not surprisingly therefore no effort has been made to articulate plans and strategies to guide department operations. After all, effective planning requires as a starting point a clear understanding of the goals an organization hopes to achieve.

### **Accountability Is Not An Organizational Value Within The Police Department And, As A Result, The Systems Needed To Support Accountability Have Not Been Established**

Accountability is not an organizational value within the Newport Police Department. This stems in part because under the recently retired chief managers have not been given sufficient authority over key decisions; consequently, it does not make sense to hold them accountable for those decisions. Managers and supervisors have had little or no input related to the resources, deployment, or scheduling of resources assigned to their units and the decisions that they do make have been micromanaged. Indeed, the micromanagement that has characterized department decision-making is antithetical to accountability. Instead of allowing managers and staff the freedom to make important decisions – and then holding managers and staff accountable for the results of those decisions – staff have had few opportunities to make important decisions and the decisions they do make have been subject to second guessing. In addition, what has passed as accountability in recent years has, in fact, been little more than thinly veiled excuses to punish individuals who do not support the chief and to reward those who support him. The pervasive organizational inconsistencies in how individuals have and have not been held accountable for their performance has fostered a culture in which individuals try to make as few decisions as possible.

The system of retribution and reward – that has passed for accountability in the current organization – has been allowed to operate unimpeded in part because the department lacks the systems needed to support a more productive approach to accountability. For example, the department's current information systems do not provide managers with the data they need to drive decisions and objectively monitor performance. Likewise, current performance management systems do not reinforce the importance of accountability. Performance evaluation processes are generally weak and on-the-job performance is not considered when making promotional decisions. Such systems, if they were in place, would have provided at least some check on the ability of managers to make arbitrary and inconsistent decisions that are unsupported by data and sound performance management processes.

## **The Department Should Implement Operational And Strategic Planning Processes And Increase Accountability**

One key to improving the performance of the Newport Police Department will be to give managers the authority to make key decisions and then to hold them accountable for the quality of decisions they make.<sup>1</sup> However, before managers can be empowered to make decisions clear expectations for performance must be established and strategic themes that define, in broad terms, the overall approaches the department will take to achieve its objectives must be articulated. The planning and accountability processes are therefore intertwined with each playing an important role in the overall effort to strengthen department performance.

**Planning.** The department should begin its effort to strengthen planning and accountability by undertaking an operational planning process. The focus of this process would be first to identify performance goals and objectives that are realistic given the availability of existing resources. The next step in the process would be to prioritize those goals and objectives and establish weights for each goal and objective. Establishing such weights is extremely important both so managers will have a sense of how they should prioritize efforts to achieve disparate goals and so the overall performance of the department in achieving all its goals can be assessed.<sup>2</sup> Then the department should develop and implement operational plans for achieving the goals that have been established. The final steps in the process would be to clearly articulate performance expectations for both individuals and units that are linked to the department's overall goals and objectives and establish mechanisms for monitoring performance.

Over the longer term, the department should work to develop a strategic plan that articulates longer-term goals that reflect the changing needs of the community. This strategic plan should focus on articulating the resources needed to implement the plan (including financial resources, personnel resources, and management resources) and how the needed resources will be developed over time. A key focus of this effort should be to facilitate a discussion of the level of service choices the department should make – the plan should consider not only what additional services, if any, are needed, but also, what services should be curtailed or eliminated.

**Accountability.** The performance goals and objectives articulated during the operational planning process will provide the foundation for the recommended accountability system. As a first step in this process, the department should develop systems and processes to monitor and report performance against goals for individuals and units as well as for the department as a whole. In addition, performance

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<sup>1</sup> Giving managers appropriate authority and holding them accountable for achieving desired results underlies the recommendation to establish patrol sector captains discussed in the preceding section. These managers will be provided the authority and resources needed to tailor services to address the varying needs of the communities in their sector but will also be held strictly accountable for performance in addressing those needs.

<sup>2</sup> For each department goal and objective the overall success of the department in achieving that goal should be evaluated using a 0 to 1 scale. By multiplying the department's performance score for each objective by the weight of that objective and summing the weighted scores for all objectives an overall score for department performance (using a 0 to 1) scale can be calculated.

management processes (e.g., performance evaluation and the promotional process) must be strengthened to support individual accountability. To support these efforts it is critical that the department work with Information Management Consultants (IMC) to ensure that managers have easy access to the essential calls for service, arrest, and outcome data needed to evaluate staffing, deployment, and employee performance.

## **D – ORGANIZATION**

### **The Current Organizational Structure Should Be Modified To Increase The Number Of Managers Reporting To The Chief That Are Not Represented By The Union**

At present, only one position in the Newport Police Department – the police chief – is not represented by a union. Consequently, the managers the chief must rely on to implement the substantial changes recommended in this report may face conflicts in implementing the recommendations if the changes needed from a management perspective conflict with what is in the best interest of the union. In addition, the current selection process gives the chief little discretion to select the managers most depended on to manage the department. This potentially puts the chief in the position of managing the department with “one hand tied behind his back.” The chief will be accountable for the success of the implementation effort but faces severe limits in selecting staff with the skills needed to drive the implementation effort. This situation would be difficult in a well functioning police department – in a department needing fundamental change it is untenable.

The department’s overall organizational structure should therefore be modified so that managers who are out of the union and who are selected by the chief lead each of the three main divisions. Deputy chiefs should lead the patrol and criminal investigation divisions – which are currently led by captains. The administrative services division – which is also currently led by a captain - should be led by a civilian director (who has the same status in the department as the deputy chiefs). In addition to managing the administrative services division the director should be charged with coordinating all special events with other city departments and internally within the department.

### **The Office Of Internal Affairs And The Inspections Unit Should Be Merged Into The Office Of Professional Standards**

Internal affairs and inspections are both led by full time lieutenants who each have fairly narrow scopes of responsibility. In particular, the volume of internal affairs investigations – a total of about 20 investigations over the past two years – is not sufficient to justify the assignment of a full-time position to this responsibility. Likewise, a full-time lieutenant is not needed to oversee the inspections function. While one officer is needed to oversee inspections and ensure they occur, all command staff should share responsibility for conducting inspections. Indeed, inspections should be viewed as an ongoing accountability mechanism used by supervisors and command staff to evaluate the performance of both individuals and units within their divisions.

To address this issue, the office of internal affairs and the inspections unit should be merged to create a new office of professional standards. A captain should lead this office and the two existing lieutenant positions should be discontinued. An administrative assistant position should be shared by this office and the administrative services division.

### **Implementing This Organizational Restructuring Will Change The Existing Configuration Of Leadership Positions**

The department's recommended organizational structure is presented in Exhibit B2-1. As this exhibit shows, in the new organizational structure four positions will report directly to the chief: deputy chief – patrol, deputy chief – investigations, director – administrative services, and captain – professional standards. The three captain positions that currently oversee the patrol, criminal investigations, and administrative services divisions should be discontinued. In addition, the two lieutenant positions currently assigned to the internal affairs and inspections units should be discontinued.

## **E – TRAINING**

### **The Department Does Not Place Sufficient Emphasis On Ensuring Employees Receive Needed Training**

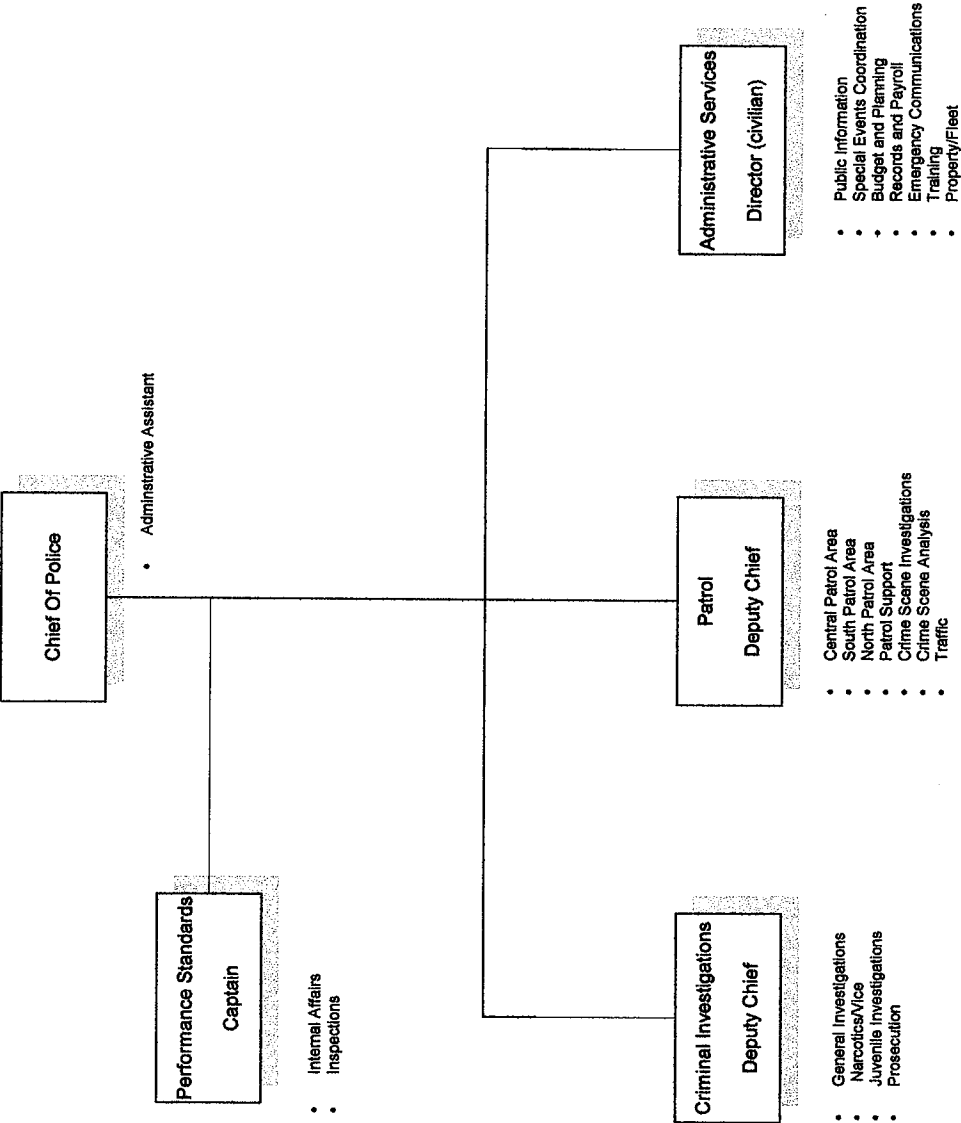
The department's current approach to training is beset by a number of problems. While sworn officers receive basic state mandated annual training and required firearms training no mechanisms have been established to determine what additional training is needed and who should receive this training. In addition, for some important functions and positions the level of training provided is non-existent. These problems are exacerbated by the fact that the officer responsible for coordinating the training program lacks substantive training experience. Each of these issues will be discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs.

**Lack of systems to assess training needs.** The department has not developed effective systems to determine what training above the basic state mandates employees need and who should receive this training. For example, decisions with regard to who is granted permission to attend off-site schools appear to have been haphazard at best. This off-site training has been extremely unevenly and inequitably distributed – some staff has received excessive off-site training while other staff has received no off-site training whatsoever. For example while some officers averaged 30 days of training per year a significant number had less than two training days per year.

To the department's credit a training committee was recently established to set training priorities and make training recommendations. However the recently retired chief ultimately controlled who was allowed to attend training and permission to participate in off-site training was based on the chief's personal biases. In fact, the chief participated in an excessive amount of off-site training – more than 40 days per year – while the needs of most line officers in the department were largely ignored.

**Inadequate training.** The training needs of some functions and units in the department have largely been ignored. In addition, insufficient training is provided to civilians, managers and supervisors, and members of the special response team and crime investigations team.

RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



- **Civilians.** The training needs of civilian staff have been largely ignored. Although there have been some attempts to send one or two dispatchers to off-site training and to allow some civilian managers to access on-line training there has been no systematic approach to meet the training needs of the civilian work force.
- **Managers and supervisors.** Additionally there is limited formal training for newly promoted sworn and civilian managers and supervisors. A two-week orientation program is provided for new supervisors and managers but this largely consists of meeting with each unit of the department to understand roles and responsibilities and learning how to handle paperwork responsibilities. Newly promoted sergeants also attend a one-week training program for first-line supervisors at Roger Williams College. Newly promoted sworn managers had attended a leadership development program at Babson College but the department has chosen to no longer participate in that program.
- **Special response team (SRT).** While the department's SRT policy indicates staff will receive 16 hours per month of SRT training, SRT members have averaged less than 16 hours of training per year over the past two years. This lack of training significantly compromises the ability of the SRT to be effective. As a result of this lack of ongoing training department command staff have, in fact, been hesitant to utilize the team and their role within the department has become very limited.
- **Crime scene investigations (CSI).** Although the department routinely sends officers for initial crime scene investigator's training when a CSI position is available, the department has not provided members of the team ongoing in-service training and has restricted their ability to hold regular meetings. This has not only limited the ability of CSI team members to stay up to date on new techniques and equipment but also has created inconsistencies in how property and evidence are handled and processed.

**Lack of expertise.** A sergeant who serves as the department's primary training officer staffs the training office. Although a number of officers have received specialized "train the trainer" certification and have certification to provide training in firearms, defensive tactics, and other specialized areas the sergeant who is currently assigned responsibility for training has no training experience and is largely functioning as a clerk and scheduler. Nor has this officer been given the opportunity to develop needed skilled and expertise. He has not participated in any training-related professional development programs. In short, this sergeant has been given responsibility for an area that has broad impact on department performance but has not been provided with the tools needed to be effective.

### **A Number Of Immediate Steps Must Be Taken To Address The Department's Training Needs**

Addressing the department's shortcomings as they relate to training should be given a high priority. In the short term it is essential that the department provides intensive training to the new chief, command staff, and all supervisors and managers to ensure that they have the leadership and management skills needed to successfully implement this study's recommendations. At the same time, the department should take steps to ensure the sergeant assigned to oversee training participates in the professional

development needed to acquire training-related expertise and skills. At a minimum the training sergeant should be trained as an instructor and develop an understanding of adult learning principles.

Over the long term the department should develop a training plan that addresses the training needs of all sworn and civilian employees. This training plan should detail the steps that need to be taken to ensure required training is provided to all specialized units and for all specialized functions. Additionally it is critical the department institute a formal training program for all newly promoted managers and supervisors (both sworn and civilian).

## **F – HUMAN RESOURCES PRACTICES**

Findings and recommendations related to human resources practices will address six areas: promotions, appointments, transfers, disciplinary action, recognition for exemplary performance, and injured in line of duty work leaves.

### **PROMOTIONS**

#### **The Current Promotional Process Is Based On Performance On A Standardized Test And Seniority And Does Not Consider Job Performance**

Promotions to sergeant, lieutenant, and captain are currently based on performance on a standardized examination (80 percent) and seniority (20 percent) and do not consider at all the candidate's job performance. Instead, the standardized examination score and the seniority score are combined and a rank ordered eligibility list is created. The chief historically has then had the option of selecting from the top three candidates on the list.

Not including job performance as a factor in making promotional decisions is problematic for a number of reasons. First, failing to consider job performance may prevent the best candidates from being considered especially if one accepts that how a person has performed over a number of years provides some indication of future performance. In addition, by not including job performance as criteria when making promotion decisions accountability for poor performance is weakened. Indeed, under the current system an officer who has a history of performance problems may in fact be ranked higher than an officer with a similar tenure who has an outstanding performance history if the "problem officer" receives a higher score on the standardized examination.

#### **Over The Past Five Years The Promotional Process Has Created Considerable Turmoil Within The Department**

The promotional decisions that have been made over the past five years have created considerable turmoil within the department primarily because the top candidates on the list were skipped, despite their stellar work histories, because they were not supporters of the chief. Indeed, a review of a list of the promotions that were made over the past three years revealed a pattern of skipping over candidates for promotion who were vocal opponents of the chief or who were associated with opponents. Dissension relating to the promotional process was further exacerbated because no substantive reason for being "skipped" was provided. Consequently, employees were given no opportunity to address any concerns that related to their being passed over for promotion.

## **The Promotional Process Should Be Modified To Ensure It Is Both Transparent And Fair**

A number of steps should be taken to strengthen the promotional process. First, the quantitative formula used to develop the promotional list should be modified to include past work performance. Second, command staff should interview top candidates for a promotion along with the chief and should provide input to the chief's decision. In addition, any candidate for promotion who is "skipped" should be provided a written explanation of why he/she was not selected. The candidate's supervisor should also receive a copy of this explanation. The employee's supervisor should then work with the employee to develop an improvement plan to address that performance deficit.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

### **Appointment To "Six Percent" Positions Have Been Made At The Sole Discretion Of The Chief**

A number of officer positions including community policing officer, detective, and other administrative sworn positions (i.e., accreditation officers) are referred to as six percent positions because incumbents receive an additional six percent in salary when they are assigned to these positions. Currently when a "six percent" position is open a job description including minimum qualifications is posted and eligible officers are able to apply. A selection committee then interviews applicants and the committee submits a list of all recommended applicants to the chief.

Until the past several years the committee would provide the chief with its first, second, and third choices for the position. The recently retired chief, however, modified the process and had the committee provide a summary of their interviews with applicants. The chief would then pick whom he wanted for the position with little regard to the applicant's employment history and with no input from the applicant's current supervisor.

### **The Processes For Appointments To "Six Percent" Positions Should Be Modified**

If unit managers and command staff are to be held accountable for the performance of their units those managers and commanders should have a strong voice about who is promoted to six percent positions within their units. When an appointed position becomes vacant the commander of the unit should lead a structured interview process that should result in final selections. The work history of the employee should then be evaluated to ensure candidates recommended for appointment have positive performance evaluations and no recent disciplinary action. The unit commander should then send the chief his/her choice for appointment to the position. If the chief does not support the recommended candidate the chief should meet with the commander to discuss the recommendation and, if appropriate, the second choice for the position should be appointed.

## **TRANSFERS**

### **The Involuntary Transfer Process Is Also Deeply Flawed**

Two types of transfers occur within the department – voluntary and involuntary. A voluntary transfer occurs when an employee has submitted a request to transfer to a

different shift when a position becomes available and that transfer is granted. An involuntary transfer occurs when the chief transfers an employee to a different shift or work unit without the employee requesting the change.

Over the past five years the vast majority of transfers within the department have been involuntary and made by the chief as punishment or in retaliation for the actions of employees. Many of these transfers were made with short notice (less than 48 hours) and with no reason for the transfer given. In addition, little effort has been made to minimize the disruption associated with transferring unit supervisors from one position to another.

### **The Transfer Process Should Be Modified To Ensure It Is Both Transparent And Fair**

The transfer process should be modified to ensure it is both transparent and fair. Unit managers and the chief should meet with all employees who are being involuntarily transferred to give a clear reason for the transfer. A written, follow-up memo summarizing the reason for the transfer should also be provided. In addition, criteria for determining when a transfer is “an emergency” and thus will occur immediately or with short notice should be established. Otherwise an appropriate notice period – typically 30 days – should be provided for all involuntary transfers. In addition, when unit managers are being transferred, whether the transfer is voluntarily or involuntarily, a transition plan should be developed to minimize the disruption associated with the transfer.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

### **Employee Discipline Has Not Been Meted Out Fairly And Consistently**

Current practices related to disciplining employees have been inconsistent and marked by vindictiveness and retaliation. In particular, employee discipline has been meted out liberally to employees viewed as being opponents of the recently retired chief while infractions of other employees who were supporters or friends of the chief have often been ignored. For example, officers who were opponents of the chief were reprimanded and disciplined for sick time abuse while officers who were supporters of the former chief who used the same or more sick time received no discipline. In other cases two officers might be involved in the same incident and one, who was a supporter of the former chief, would receive no discipline, while the other officer might be reprimanded or suspended. Time and again it was reported that many incidents involving supporters of the recently retired chief were swept under the rug and, in some cases, the officers involved in these incidents were later promoted.

Even worse, in some cases, disciplinary action has been used as a weapon against staff rather than a management accountability tool. In such cases, supervisors have been directed to watch and scrutinize a particular officer and find things about which to “write the officer up” and recommend discipline. The phrases “build a case against,” “you will never get a thing as long as I’m chief,” or “your future with the department is finished” were commonplace in the department and created an environment where employees were more worried about covering their backs than serving the citizens of Newport. In interviews, many officers indicated they often thought first about the potential consequences of their actions and how the chief would interpret the action before

responding to a citizen's needs and that this often resulted in providing citizens a conservative, lower quality service.

### **Disciplinary Processes Should Be Consistent, Impartial, And Fair**

The new chief and command staff must work to ensure the police department's disciplinary processes are consistent, impartial, and fair. Specific steps in the process should be articulated and, where possible, criteria developed to determine when the process should begin. To the extent possible the criteria for taking disciplinary action and the consequences associated with particular actions should be clearly articulated to staff. For example, staff should know what the criteria for being disciplined for excessive use of sick time are and what sequence of disciplinary steps will be taken to address the violation (i.e., formal warning followed by one day suspension).

### **RECOGNITION FOR EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE**

#### **Employees Have Been Inconsistently Recognized For Exemplary Performance**

Over the past several years when a supervisor would submit a request that a group of employees be recognized for exemplary performance based on how they handled a particular incident some of the employees would be recognized while others would not be recognized or their recognition would be delayed. Command staff reported that recommendations for recognition submitted for staff who were not viewed as supporters of the chief were often discarded or sat on the chief's desk for months with no action.

#### **The Department Should Develop An Employee Recognition Committee**

To address the issue of inconsistent performance recognition the department should establish an employee recognition committee. This committee should be charged with establishing clear criteria defining when exemplary performance should be recognized and for determining when exemplary performance by employees should be recognized. All requests for commendation should be reviewed by the committee, which should submit recommendations for commendation to the chief. If a supervisor submits a request for commendation that the committee feels is not warranted, an explanation for its action should be sent to the supervisor. Moreover, if particular staff is excluded from receiving commendation due to other performance issues their supervisor should be notified of the reasons for exclusion.

### **INJURED IN THE LINE OF DUTY (ILD) LEAVES**

#### **The Department Does Not Appropriately Manage The Amount Of Time Sworn Officers Are Off Duty As A Result Of Injuries In The Line Of Duty**

The department has experienced an increasing number of work days lost as a result of officers being injured in the line of duty. In fact, an analysis of staff attendance data indicates an equivalent of three full time sworn positions was lost due to ILD leaves in Calendar Year 2005. The length of employee absences related to ILD has increased in part due to the long delays in getting medical treatment, therapy, and surgery approved by the inter-local trust. Indeed, several staff interviewed indicated being out on leave for weeks waiting for approvals for surgery or therapy. Additionally, staff indicated in interviews that employees have little incentive to return to work from injuries due in part

to the poor work environment in the department and so do not push to get approvals expedited.

The department has also not developed a systematic approach to monitoring the status of employees on ILD and encouraging their return to work. Modified duty is offered inconsistently and there is no consequence if the employee refuses the modified assignment. In fact, rather than being used as a tool to return an employee to full duty the assignments are viewed as punitive.

### **The Department And City Should Take Two Actions To Gain Control Of Injured In The Line Of Duty (ILD) Leaves**

Department leaders should work with the city's human resources department and the city manager to bring issues related to inter-local trust management of ILD claims to the forefront and address delays in approval of consultations, therapy, and surgery. The department should also strengthen its system for monitoring the status of employees who are on ILD leave and for transitioning those employees back to work.

## **G - CIVILIANIZATION**

### **In General, Civilians Should Fill Police Department Positions Unless An Affirmative Case Can Be Made That Sworn Officers Are Needed**

One of the primary reasons positions should be filled by civilians unless a sworn officer is needed to perform the job is that the cost of employing sworn officers is much higher than the cost of employing civilians. In addition, the recruit and in-service training sworn officers receive is much more extensive (and costly) than the training civilian employees receive.

Notwithstanding these cost savings there are risks associated with assigning positions to civilian staff. During budget cutbacks civilian positions are much more likely to be targeted for elimination than sworn positions particularly since the current Fraternal Order of Police contract specifies the number of sworn positions that will be funded. From a bureaucratic rather than a management perspective, assigning all high priority positions to sworn officers helps protect them from a budget axe.

These concerns should not unduly sway decisions about which positions should be filled by civilians and which positions should be held by sworn officers. (Indeed, in the analysis that follows these factors were not considered.) Nonetheless, decision makers need to be aware of these risks so they will be in a better position to manage them.

### **A Systematic Approach Should Be Taken To Evaluating Which Positions Should Be Filled By Civilians And Which Positions Should Be Filled By Sworn Officers**

A systematic framework should be used to evaluate which positions should be assigned to sworn and civilian employees. Taking this approach removes some of the individual bias associated with determining which functions should be assigned to civilians and which functions should be assigned to sworn officers. In addition, using this framework to evaluate all positions ensures equal attention is devoted to assessing opportunities to assign civilians to fill positions currently held by sworn officers and *vice versa* for all positions. (A less systematic approach may result in some positions that are candidates

for civilianization not being evaluated.) Moreover, once a well defined framework for determining which positions should be filled by civilians and which positions should be filled by sworn officers has been established, this framework can be used to assess what category of staff is appropriate for any new positions that are established.

The framework used to assess which positions should be filled by sworn officers and which positions should be filled by civilians assumes that an affirmative case for assigning a position to a sworn officer can be made under three conditions:

- The position requires the law enforcement powers of a sworn officer
- The skills, training, and experience of a sworn officer are needed to effectively perform the job duties
- The skills, training, and experience of a sworn officer are not required to effectively perform the job but assigning the position to a sworn officer is beneficial to citizens and/or the department and the value of these benefits outweigh the costs

The analysis of potential opportunities for civilianization should begin by identifying positions for which the case for assigning a sworn officer to fill the position is unambiguous. This will be the case when law enforcement powers are required to perform the functions assigned to the position; a broad range of the skills, training, and experience of a sworn officer are required; and the job functions that justify the assignment of a sworn officer comprise the preponderance of the position's job duties.

When an unambiguous case for assigning a sworn officer to fill a position cannot be made it may nonetheless be beneficial<sup>3</sup> for the function to be assigned to a sworn officer. Three factors should be considered when making this determination.

- **Credibility.** In some cases, assigning a sworn officer to fill a position provides the credibility needed to effectively perform the position's job responsibilities. For example, while background investigations can be performed by civilians – law enforcement powers and the skills and experience of a sworn officer are not needed to conduct these investigations – accessing information on an employee's background from some sources is facilitated if one states that he or she is a police officer. Similarly, while civilians could conceivably work as recruiters they would likely not be effective because potential employees would want to discuss what police work is like with someone who has actually served as a police officer.
- **Operational knowledge and experience.** For some functions, the operational knowledge and perspective of a sworn officer is helpful in performing job duties. However, the need for operational knowledge and expertise should only provide a rationale for assigning the function to a sworn officer if the need for this knowledge and perspective is consistent and frequent and if the negative consequences that may result from not having this knowledge and perspective is sufficiently severe that the additional costs associated with assigning a sworn officer to the position are warranted.

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<sup>3</sup> As noted, the estimated benefits associated with assigning a sworn officer to the position should outweigh the estimated costs.

- **Leadership development.** In some instances, while a sworn officer is not needed to fill a position, assigning a sworn officer to the position is helpful in developing the skills of future leaders. This rationale for assigning sworn officers to a position should be used only if the level of technical skills and professional expertise needed to perform the function are not excessive (i.e., a sworn officer rotating through the assignment on a three year cycle<sup>4</sup> can quickly develop the skills and expertise needed to perform the job) and if the best way to become familiar with the function or activity is by managing or performing it on a day-to-day basis.

This evaluation framework was used to assess the positions within the department that should be assigned to sworn and civilian staff. The results of this analysis are presented in Exhibit B2-2. Please note that positions for which an unambiguous case can be made for assigning the position to a sworn officer are not presented in this exhibit. In general, only positions for which additional analysis was needed to determine whether the position should be filled by a sworn officer or a civilian are presented.<sup>5 6</sup> As this exhibit shows, a total of four positions – Sergeant, Administrative Services - Property and Fleet; Captain, Administrative Services; Lieutenant, Administrative Services; and Officer, Inspectional Services - currently held by sworn officers can be civilianized.

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<sup>4</sup> If the primary reason for assigning the function or service to a sworn officer is leadership development, potential leaders should rotate through the position so that a number of potential future leaders can benefit from the experience of holding the position.

<sup>5</sup> In addition, positions that are recommended to be discontinued in other sections of this report are excluded from this analysis.

<sup>6</sup> The analysis for some positions about which the consultants had questions as to whether the position might be held by a civilian is also presented.

CIVILIANIZATION ANALYSIS

Complete Only If There Is Not An Unambiguous Case For Sworn											
Unit	Position	Law Enforcement Powers Required? (Yes or No)	Skills, Training, And Experience Of Sworn Officer Required? (Yes or No)	Job Duties Requiring Sworn Preponderance Of Job Function? (Yes or No)	Unambiguous Case For Sworn? (Yes Or No)	Credibility Of Sworn Needed? (Yes or No)	Operational Knowledge And Perspective Of Sworn Helpful? (Yes Or No)	Need For Knowledge And Perspective Of Sworn Is Consistent And Frequent? (Yes or No)	Negative Consequences Of Making Decisions Without Sworn Knowledge And Skills Are Significant? (Yes or No)	Assigning Sworn Officers To The Position Is Helpful In Developing The Skills Of Future Leaders? (Yes or No)	Complete Only If Assigning Sworn Officers Is Helpful In Developing Leadership Skills Best Way To Become Familiar With Function Is To Manage Or Perform It On A Day-To-Day Basis? (Yes or No)
Administrative Services	Captain	No	No	No	No	No	No			No	No
Administrative Services- Dispatch/ Records/Public Information	Lieutenant	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
Administrative Services- Property/Fleet	Sergeant	No	No	No	Yes						No
Inspectional Services	Lieutenant	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Inspectional Services- Accreditation	Officer	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
Investigations- BCI	Detective	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

Summary Assessment: Position (As Currently Configured) Should Be Held By Sworn? (Yes or No)

**B3 – ISSUES AFFECTING INDIVIDUAL POLICE DEPARTMENT  
UNITS**

## **B3 – ISSUES AFFECTING INDIVIDUAL POLICE DEPARTMENT UNITS**

This chapter presents management and operational issues that primarily affect one police department unit or office. The chapter is organized into four sections that correspond with each of the divisions and offices reporting to the chief of police: patrol; criminal investigations; internal affairs and inspections; and administrative services.

### **A – PATROL DIVISION**

Six areas relating to patrol division management and operations are discussed in this section: patrol supervision; patrol staffing; patrol support unit; special response team; traffic enforcement; and crime scene investigations.

#### **PATROL SUPERVISION**

##### **Patrol Sergeants Should Assume Responsibility For Serving As The Officer In Charge On Patrol Shifts**

As discussed in Chapter B2, when the police department adopts a more geographic orientation the patrol lieutenants – who currently serve as shift leaders – will be replaced by patrol captains – each of whom will be responsible for one area of the city. When this transition has been completed patrol sergeants should assume responsibility as shift commanders. Two sergeants should be assigned to each patrol shift – one of whom should be designated as the officer in charge (OIC). Please note, however, that the sergeant serving as the OIC need not be tethered to a desk in the police station. On the contrary, once the shift is set up this sergeant should be out in the field directly supervising patrol officers and providing needed support and should be available by radio to return to the station if needed. If there are prisoners being held in detention the OIC should coordinate with staff in the emergency communication unit to ensure prisoners are monitored via cameras in accordance with current department procedures. Sergeants on the shift who are not assigned OIC responsibilities should be on the street providing supervision for the preponderance of the watch. The sergeants working together on each shift should share responsibility for approving the reports of the officers assigned to the watch.

It should be noted that the spans of control of the two sergeants assigned to each shift will be quite narrow – averaging between 3.6 and 4.1 officers per sergeant. In addition to their supervisory and OIC responsibilities, however, these sergeants should devote significant time to supporting the proactive policing initiatives designed by patrol captains. Indeed, collectively the sergeants should be expected to devote between one-third and one-half of their time supporting these proactive initiatives.

Four sergeants on each of the three patrol shifts are needed to ensure two sergeants will be on duty 24 hours a day seven days a week. Four new sergeant positions will need to be added to the eight existing patrol sergeant positions to achieve the recommended level of staffing.

## **PATROL STAFFING**

### **A Small Increase In Patrol Staffing Is Needed To Ensure A Prompt Response To All Calls For Service**

The number of patrol officers needed to respond to citizen initiated calls for service relates directly to the level of service expected in the community. Communities that are willing to accept a slower response time need fewer patrol officers to respond to calls than communities that expect a faster response to calls for service. Currently, 41 patrol officers (including positions that are currently vacant) are assigned to the patrol division and are primarily responsible for responding to calls for service.

The citizens of Newport have come to expect a high level of service from their police department. For this reason, the following assumptions were made in determining patrol staffing needs:

- Sufficient patrol officers should be deployed to ensure that during the busiest hours of a shift there is a 95 percent probability that an officer will be available to respond to a call when it is received<sup>1</sup>
- Patrol officers should devote no more than 50 percent of their shift to responding to calls for service – this will give them sufficient time to support proactive policing initiatives developed by patrol captains
- Average travel time to any call should not exceed five minutes

Determining the number of patrol officers needed to achieve these baseline service expectations involved a number of steps (this methodology was developed based on available reports as raw call data could not be exported from the IMC database):

- **Step 1: Determine the number of citizen initiated calls for service received.** To determine the number of citizen initiated calls for service received data was extracted from monthly call reports by day of the week and hour of the day. Next, this database was divided into two parts to reflect seasonal variations in workload. One database was developed for October through May and one database was developed for June through September. These databases were then modified to eliminate officer initiated activity by multiplying the total calls received by the percentage of calls that were dispatched.
- **Step 2: Adjust calls for service to reflect the fact that the initial response to some calls requires two or three officers.** To protect the safety of officers and to handle incidents effectively some calls for service require the initial dispatch of two

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<sup>1</sup> During the off season (October through May) there will be a 99 percent probability that an officer will be available when a call is received. During the busiest months of the year (June through September) there will be a 95 percent probability that an officer will be available when a call is received when the response availability of the recommended patrol support unit (discussed in the next subsection) is considered.

officers<sup>2</sup> and others require the initial dispatch of three<sup>3</sup> officers. The percentage of calls that are “one person calls,” those that are “two person calls,” and those that are “three person calls” was determined. Again, it was assumed that this percentage holds true across the board for all hours and all days. The number of one person, two person, and three person calls for each hour (for dispatched calls) was then calculated by multiplying the appropriate percentages times the number of calls received each hour and summing the resulting products.

- **Step 3: Use queuing analysis to determine the number of officers needed by hour of the day and day of the week.** Queuing analysis can be used to determine the number of officers needed each hour of the day and day of the week to ensure a high probability that when a call is received a sworn officer will be available to respond. The analysis assumes that an average call will require 35 minutes to complete (from the time an officer is dispatched to the call to the time the officer reports back in service). The number of officers that need to be deployed during each hour of the week to ensure a 99 percent probability that an officer will be available to respond when a call is received during the non-peak season (October through May) is presented in Exhibit B3-1.<sup>4</sup>
- **Step 4: Use linear programming to determine the best way to schedule officers to meet workload requirements.** Linear programming can be used to determine the optimal way to schedule officers to meet workload requirements (assuming that the maximum number of officers during the busiest hour, as determined by the queuing analysis, is assigned to the shift).
- **Step 5: Ensure patrol officers have adequate time to perform activities other than responding to calls for service.** Patrol officers should be expected to perform functions and activities other than respond to calls for service. For example, they should be expected to perform directed patrol, interact with community members, assist with traffic enforcement, and help implement the crime reduction strategies developed by the recommended patrol captains. In addition, they need the time to complete administrative tasks and complete high quality reports. To ensure patrol officers have sufficient time to perform the full range of duties and responsibilities expected of them, response to calls should account for no more than 50 percent of the workload of the officers assigned to any shift. As the table below shows, at the levels of staffing required to ensure an officer is available to respond to calls 99 percent of the time during the non-peak season, no officers on any shift will devote more than 50 percent of their work day to responding to calls. Indeed, during the

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<sup>2</sup> The analysis assumes that the following types of calls require a two-officer response: any offense with fleeing suspect, arson, bombing in progress, assault in progress, breaking and entering in progress, disorderly in progress, family offense in progress, fight in progress, home or business alarm, larceny in progress, life line alarm, liquor violation in progress, narcotic offense in progress, robbery in progress, sex offense in progress, shots fired, stolen vehicle in progress, suicide in progress, threats in progress, vandalism in progress, vehicle alarm, weapons in progress, and working fire.

<sup>3</sup> An initial response of three officers is required for two types of calls – disturbance tavern and assist the officer.

<sup>4</sup> A 99 percent response standard during the non-peak season provides sufficient capacity to ensure a 95 percent response standard during the peak season.

**Patrol Officer Staffing**  
**Assumes 35 minutes out of service and 99% availability**

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Midnight To 1:00 a.m.	7	5	4	4	4	5	7
1:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m.	8	6	6	6	6	7	9
2:00 a.m. to 3:00 a.m.	7	5	5	4	5	5	6
3:00 a.m. to 4:00 a.m.	5	4	4	4	4	4	6
4:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m.	4	3	3	4	3	3	5
5:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.	4	4	4	5	4	4	4
6:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.	4	5	5	5	5	6	5
7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.	4	5	5	5	5	5	4
8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.	5	6	7	7	6	8	6
9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.	6	8	7	7	7	7	7
10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	6	8	8	8	8	7	7
11:00 a.m. to Noon	6	7	7	8	7	7	7
Noon to 1:00 p.m.	6	7	8	7	8	7	7
1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.	6	7	8	7	7	7	7
2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.	6	7	7	7	7	8	7
3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	6	7	7	7	7	7	6
4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.	7	8	8	8	8	8	8
6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.	7	8	8	8	8	8	9
7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.	7	8	7	7	8	8	8
8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.	6	6	7	7	7	8	8
9:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.	6	7	6	7	7	8	8
10:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.	6	6	6	6	6	8	8
11:00 p.m. to Midnight	5	5	6	6	6	8	8

busiest shifts of the week less than a third (31 percent) of an officer's time will be devoted to answering calls.

AVERAGE WORKLOAD							
	Percent Of Shift Answering Calls						
	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
Nights	17%	12%	13%	12%	11%	15%	20%
Days	18%	27%	28%	27%	26%	27%	24%
Evenings	22%	25%	25%	25%	26%	31%	31%

- **Step 6: Adjust staffing levels, as needed, to ensure the time required for officers to travel to calls does not exceed service level expectations.** No adjustment to staffing levels is needed in Newport to ensure that the average travel time of officers responding to calls is less than five minutes. Indeed, analysis suggests average travel time will be approximately 2.3 minutes.
- **Step 7: Increase staffing to account for expected absences.** To this point, the staffing analysis calculates the number of sworn officers who need to be working on each watch to achieve service expectations. The number of officers that should be assigned to each patrol shift is greater, however, because on each shift a number of officers will be unavailable for duty because they are sick, being trained, on leave, or for other reasons. A relief factor, based on the actual number of officers absent over a recent 12 month period, must be calculated to determine the number of additional officers that should be assigned to each watch.<sup>5</sup> The number of officers needed on each shift was adjusted to reflect expected absences. Based on 2005 absence data the relief factor was calculated to be 1.20.

Based on this analysis 42 officers are needed if the current four day on and two day off wheel schedule is used (or one more than the number currently deployed). The tables below illustrate how staff should be deployed on each shift.

Four On And Two Off Wheel Schedule	
Shift	Number of Positions Assigned
Midnight to 8 a.m.	13
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.	14
4 p.m. to Midnight	15
<i>Total</i>	<i>42</i>

<sup>5</sup> Please note that because the relief factor is assigned to specific shift absences resulting from regularly scheduled days off, regular days off do not need to be included in the relief factor.

## **The Patrol Division's Current Scheduling Practices Increase Staffing Requirements**

At present patrol officers are scheduled on a four day on two day off schedule – the so-called “wheel” schedule. From the perspective of some employees this schedule is advantageous as it provides all employees the opportunity to be off on some weekends. From a management perspective, however, this schedule complicates efforts to ensure that the number of employees working varies with workload. Indeed, because the current four day on and two day off wheel does not allow for variability in scheduling by day of the week on some shifts more officers are scheduled than are needed to answer calls while on other shifts fewer officers than are needed are scheduled.

The four day on two day off schedule also increases staffing requirements. Indeed, the linear programming analysis that was conducted to determine the most efficient way to schedule patrol officers to meet service standards found that three more officers need to be employed under a “four two” work schedule than if officers were scheduled on a more traditional five days on two days off work schedule.

Shift	Five Days On Two Days Off Schedule	Four Days On Two Days Off Schedule
Midnight to 8:00 a.m.	12	13
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.	13	14
4:00 p.m. to Midnight	14	15
<i>Total</i>	39	42

## **PATROL SUPPORT UNIT**

### **Demand For Police Services In Newport Is Highest During The Summer And Early Fall**

Because Newport is a resort city the volume of calls for service the department receives increases significantly from Memorial Day through Columbus Day. During these months, most notably from Thursday evening through early Monday morning the population of the city more than doubles as tourists come to stay in the city's hotels, arrive by boats and dock in the city's harbor, or drive in for the evening to patronize the city's restaurants, nightclubs, and bars. The city also hosts numerous special events during this peak season. During these same summer months calls for service from Newport citizens outside of the downtown tourist area increases as the warmer weather and longer days result in more activity particularly in large housing complexes. This influx of tourists paired with increased activity across the city results in an increase in calls for service. In fact, during these months calls for service increase by an average of 1.2 calls per hour, from an average of 3.0 calls to 4.2 calls. This results in an increase from an average of 70 calls per day to 100 calls per day.

Exhibit B3-2 shows the average calls per hour from June through September compared to October through May. This exhibit illustrates the demand for police service increases significantly during evening and early morning hours each weekend when restaurants,

AVERAGE CALLS FOR SERVICE PER HOUR  
June through September Vs. October through May

Exhibit B3-2  
Page 1 of 1

June 1 through September 30										October 1 through May 31									
Hour	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Hour	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat				
0	6.7	3	3	2.8	2.4	4.3	6	0	3.4	1.6	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.9	3.3				
1	7.3	4.1	3.7	4.3	3.8	4.7	6.9	1	4.6	2.3	2.6	2.6	2.3	3.4	5.5				
2	7.6	3	2.2	2.3	2	2.9	5.9	2	3.2	1.5	1.6	1.3	1.5	2.1	2.9				
3	2.7	1.4	1.2	1.1	1	1.5	3.7	3	1.6	0.8	1.2	0.9	0.9	1	2.3				
4	1.7	1.2	1.5	1.2	0.7	1	1.9	4	1.1	0.5	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	1.4				
5	1.2	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.5	5	0.8	1	1.2	1.4	1	1	1				
6	0.9	2.3	3.1	3	2.1	2.6	2.3	6	1	1.9	1.8	1.6	1.4	2.2	1.9				
7	1.4	2.3	2.4	1.9	1.8	2.3	2.3	7	1	1.9	1.9	1.5	1.7	1.7	1.3				
8	1.8	3.7	4	3.9	4.1	4	2.4	8	1.6	2.9	3.4	3.3	2.9	4.3	2.3				
9	3.9	4.9	4.9	4.5	3.5	4.6	3.5	9	2.5	4.4	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.3	3.1				
10	2.9	4.4	4.6	5	5.3	4.5	4	10	2.4	4.8	4.5	4	4.1	3.8	3.8				
11	3.8	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.3	3.9	11	2.7	3.7	3.8	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.5				
12	4.4	5.5	5	4.7	4.9	4.2	4	12	2.8	3.3	4	3.3	4	3.2	3.6				
13	3	4.3	4.3	5.3	5.8	4.3	3.5	13	2.9	3.4	4.1	3.4	3.7	3.3	3.7				
14	3.5	4.2	4.1	5.1	4.7	5.8	4.5	14	2.6	3.4	3.9	3.7	3.9	4.5	3.7				
15	3.4	4	4	4.1	3.9	5	4.5	15	2.4	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.2	3.7	2.8				
16	3.6	4.2	4.5	4.4	4.9	5.1	4.1	16	3.1	3.9	3.9	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.1				
17	4.5	5.3	4.6	5.7	5.7	5.4	5.1	17	3.5	4.8	4.4	4.8	4.4	4.8	4				
18	6.2	5.6	4.3	5.4	5.6	5.5	6.2	18	3.6	4.1	4.3	4.6	4.5	4.5	5				
19	4.4	6.5	4.6	5.4	5	6.7	5.6	19	3.7	4	3.7	3.1	4.1	4.6	4				
20	5.9	5.1	5.1	5.9	6.9	6.6	6.4	20	3	3	3.3	3.6	3.4	4.2	4.8				
21	6	5.1	5.3	5.7	5.9	7.5	7.8	21	2.7	3.3	2.9	3.2	3.4	4.2	4.3				
22	5.2	4	4.7	5.5	5.2	7.8	9	22	2.8	2.4	2.6	2.4	2.9	4.2	4.8				
23	4.6	3.1	4.2	4.1	5	9.7	9.1	23	2.1	2	2.6	2.2	2.5	4.4	4.5				

Shaded areas represent largest increases in calls for service.

nightclubs, and bars attract the largest volume of visitors. Blocks of time where the call for service demand is substantially higher, from 5:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. on Thursday through Sunday/early Monday, are shaded in gray. During this time block calls for service increase by 59 percent over off-season levels as compared to an average 31 percent increase during other summer hours.

During most shifts queuing analysis indicates that sufficient capacity exists within the patrol division to respond to the increased calls for service during the peak season.<sup>6</sup> However the increase in calls during particular blocks of time on weekend evenings and nights, notably those shaded in gray in Exhibit B3-2, is so significant that additional officers are needed.

### **The Patrol Support Unit Should Be Used During The Peak Season To Provide The Additional Capacity Needed During Hours With A High Demand For Service**

The patrol support unit recommended in Chapter B2 to provide the capacity needed to address proactive policing needs should also be used to address this problem. Queuing analysis indicates that during the hours of 5:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. (Thursday through Sunday) four additional officers are needed to ensure there is a 95 percent probability of an officer being available to respond to a call. The officers and sergeant assigned to the patrol support unit should therefore be scheduled to work during peak summer hours to ensure sufficient officers are available to meet the increased demand for service. Staffing the unit with four officers – a sergeant (who will be a working supervisor during the summer and answer calls) and three officers – who work a 10 hour shift from 5:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. – will provide sufficient capacity to ensure an officer is available to respond to a call 95 percent of the time.

### **SPECIAL RESPONSE TEAM (SRT)**

#### **The Department Should Determine Whether Maintaining An SRT Is Worth The Investment Of Resources Needed To Ensure The Team Is Effective**

Although the department has identified officers, two sergeants, and one lieutenant to serve as members of a special response team, the department has neither invested in resources nor empowered the unit to effectively fulfill that role.<sup>7</sup> Because the department has not provided the financial resources necessary to pay for overtime and compensatory time needed for training, the team has not received the level of training that is mandated by department policy and critical to the safety of team members and the community. Team members have averaged less than 16 hours of training per year rather than the mandated 16 hours per month. The operational policies of the retired chief also limited the role the special response team played in department operations. Over the past two years the retired chief has not used this team as a support resource to

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<sup>6</sup> The primary difference is that during the non-peak season there is a 99 percent probability that an officer will be available to respond to a call when it is received while during the peak season that probability falls to 95 percent.

<sup>7</sup> Special response team members are not assigned this responsibility on a full-time basis. Instead, they are assigned to other units within the department but come together when the expertise and equipment of the SRT are needed to address an incident.

the department and in fact, set policy to severely limit the use of search warrants and most interventions that would employ the team.

The department should determine if it wishes to maintain its own special response team. Certainly, not all police departments the size of Newport maintain an SRT. In fact, many police departments in Rhode Island rely on the state police, regional teams, or neighboring communities to provide this type of support. Department leaders, along with the city manager, should weigh the benefits and costs associated with supporting its own team and make a decision to either disband the special response team or take the steps necessary to ensure the team is fully operational and effective. If the cost of maintaining the team is deemed to be greater than the benefits, the department should work to partner with neighboring communities by joining the already formed regional team.

**Benefits.** The primary benefits of maintaining the special response team are providing the Newport community with the immediate availability of officers with specialized training to respond to critical incidents and the ability to use the team on a wide variety of incidents. For example, maintaining the SRT provides the internal capacity to work proactively with the narcotics/vice unit to make drug sweeps and implement search warrants. Other benefits to be considered include the opportunity to develop more skilled officers, the recruitment and retention benefits gained by officers having the opportunity to be members of the SRT, and the gains that occur from having officers involved in team building and skill development on a regular basis.

**Costs.** The primary costs associated with maintaining the team are training and equipment. Training costs include both the costs associated with paying for compensatory time for officers who attend training during their time off and with paying for overtime for coverage to relieve officers who attend training.

## **TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT**

### **The Department Should Eliminate The Current Traffic Stop Quota And Instead Focus On Selective Traffic Enforcement**

The department has established a quota of 20 traffic stops per month per patrol officer and placed a high priority on officers performing these stops. The number of stops per month is reviewed at roll call and an officer's performance is evaluated based on meeting this quota. Although the number of traffic stop opportunities varies by shift, no adjustment is made to the traffic stop quota – all officers are assigned the same quota regardless of their shift. In addition, officers who serve as CSIs have the same stop quota as other officers despite the fact that they have more responsibilities.

The emphasis on traffic stops also has a negative affect on the quality of service citizens receive. During focus groups and interviews both citizens and officers shared numerous instances where during the last several days of the month when officers are working to meet their monthly quota a citizen might be stopped multiple times during a two hour period for a minor infraction, such as a light out.

While maintaining a quota for traffic stops may raise revenue for the city, there are few other benefits for citizens. Certainly this approach to traffic enforcement has little impact on traffic safety in the city of Newport. The department should therefore eliminate the traffic stop quota and instead focus on selective traffic enforcement. Traffic stops should

not be viewed as an end in themselves but rather a means to the end of reduced traffic accidents (especially injury accidents). The department should focus its "selective traffic enforcement" efforts on areas that analysis suggests are at the greatest risk for accidents.

### **The Traffic Sergeant's Full Attention Should Be Focused On Traffic Enforcement And Related Traffic And Parking Issues**

The traffic unit is current led by a sergeant who oversees a number of civilian traffic aides, school crossing guards<sup>8</sup> and manages the department's traffic enforcement budget. The number of traffic aides fluctuates throughout the year as these aides are hired as temporary, 13-week employees, to support seasonal traffic enforcement needs and support special event traffic control. Due to seasonal hiring fluctuations and rotation of individuals through these temporary positions the sergeant is interviewing and training new aides on an ongoing basis. Recently this sergeant has been assigned information technology responsibilities that have not only taken time away from his core responsibilities but also have resulted in officers being pulled from patrol duties to cover traffic responsibilities – such as supporting the state traffic court – that the traffic sergeant no longer has time to handle.

The duties of the traffic sergeant should be adjusted so that he can focus his full attention on traffic and parking related issues, including working to address traffic and parking needs created by the city's many special events. As the sole full-time officer focused on traffic enforcement in a city with many traffic enforcement, traffic control, and parking control issues the traffic sergeant has more than a full plate. In addition, implementing this recommendation will allow the traffic sergeant to assume responsibility for traffic related activities currently handled by patrol officers. The current practice of pulling officers from their patrol shifts to attend traffic court and manage other traffic related responsibilities depletes the patrol shifts and results in a delay in responding to calls.

### **The Traffic Sergeant Has Limited Ability To Impact The Traffic Enforcement Activities And Priorities Of Patrol**

Although the traffic sergeant has developed excellent systems for tracking traffic enforcement issues across the city<sup>9</sup> he has only a limited ability to use these systems to improve traffic enforcement. The primary problem is that there is no organizational link between the traffic sergeant and the OICs who manage the patrol shifts. While the traffic sergeant endeavors to communicate traffic enforcement priorities to the OICs there is no guarantee that the OIC will communicate these priorities to the officer staffing the traffic car and to other patrol officers. In fact during interviews officers indicated that when not responding to calls they are able to set their own priorities and there is no requirement, unless assigned by the OIC to a particular enforcement site, to follow through on the priorities set by the traffic sergeant.

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<sup>8</sup> School crossing guards, though supervised by the traffic sergeant, are paid for by the Newport School Department.

<sup>9</sup> The traffic sergeant gathers and analyzes information from a range of sources including traffic accident data, reports from officers and traffic aides, and complaints from citizens.

The traffic sergeant should work closely with sector captains to set traffic enforcement priorities for officers assigned to the traffic car and for other patrol officers. Please note that unlike the current OICs who have few if any performance measures for which they are accountable, patrol sector captains should be evaluated, in part, based on the number of injury accidents that occur in their sector. These captains therefore will be aggressive consumers of the information provided by the traffic sergeant and will have a strong incentive to use that information to develop and implement effective traffic enforcement strategies in their sectors.

### **The City And Department Should Aggressively Enforce Parking Requirements Throughout The Year**

As stated earlier the department employs temporary traffic aides to serve as crossing guards, monitor parking in the city, write parking tickets, and assist with some traffic control during special events. Scheduling of these traffic aides fluctuates throughout the year based on demand for service. The cost of these traffic aides is supported by revenue generated by parking tickets and meters.

Despite the concerns of merchants and community leaders, the city does not enforce parking as aggressively from November to April as it does during the rest of the year. In focus groups, merchants and community leaders expressed particular concern that the lack of aggressive year round parking enforcement reduces parking turnover, which in turn, negatively affects the number of patrons who trade in local business. Moreover, the lack of aggressive parking enforcement not only impacts businesses but also decreases parking meter and parking tickets revenue. To address this issue, the department should work with the city to increase parking meter use and should enforce parking regulations consistently on a year round basis. Please note that this recommendation can be implemented at no cost to the city as long as the resulting increase in parking meter and parking ticket revenues exceeds the cost of parking enforcement staff.

### **CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATIONS**

#### **Responsibility For Crime Scene Investigations Should Be Assigned To The Patrol Division**

At present, responsibility for crime scene investigations is split between the patrol and criminal investigations divisions. The criminal investigations division includes a bureau of criminal investigations that is staffed with a detective. This detective responds to major crime scenes, manages all evidence collected at crime scenes, works with state crime labs that process and test the department's evidence, provides training and support to officers who are trained as crime scene investigators, acts as the city's Sex Offender Registry coordinator, and oversees booking and detention areas. However, shift patrol officers who have been trained to collect and process evidence at crime scenes conduct most of the crime scene investigations that are performed by the department.

The organizational separation between the bureau of criminal investigations and the patrol officers who conduct the bulk of the crime scene investigations complicates efforts to effectively coordinate the department's overall approach to processing evidence at

crime scenes and limits oversight and accountability. (The patrol supervisors who oversee the patrol officers who process evidence at crime scenes lack the technical background needed to effectively oversee this function.) To address this problem, the bureau of criminal investigations should be renamed the crime scene investigations unit and should be reassigned from the criminal investigations unit to the patrol division. In addition, the detective position that functions as lead crime scene investigator should be upgraded to sergeant and should report directly to the deputy chief. This sergeant should provide support, training, and indirect supervision to patrol officers who serve as crime scene investigators.

## **B – CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS**

A recommendation to increase the staffing of the narcotics/vice unit by two detectives to increase the department's ability to undertake proactive initiatives to reduce crime and address community concerns is presented in Chapter B2. This section discusses opportunities to strengthen the general investigations unit by improving case assignment practices, more aggressively managing the detective work force, and ensuring appropriate supervision and oversight. A final subsection discusses division staffing needs.

### **CASE ASSIGNMENT**

#### **Case Assignment Practices Should Be Revised To Focus Investigator Time On Criminal Cases For Which There Is A Reasonable Likelihood The Case Can Be Solved**

Effective management of follow-up criminal investigations begins with the case assignment process. Limiting the cases that are assigned for follow-up investigation to those that warrant the investment of a detective's time (and the city's resources) ensures investigators focus their efforts on productive activities. Case assignment practices in Newport, however, divert detective attention from more productive activities in two ways. First, detectives devote considerable effort to investigating minor infractions that can better be handled in civil court. Second, case screening practices have not been implemented to ensure detectives focus on cases for which there is a reasonable likelihood the case can be solved.

- **Investigation of minor infractions.** Detectives are currently assigned responsibility for resolving bounced check disputes and investigating unreturned video rentals. When handling such matters, detectives are doing little more than serving as a collection agency for the affected businesses. While from the perspective of these businesses this is a valuable service, it is not a productive use of the time of skilled investigators and does not represent a good use of scarce city resources.
- **Case screening.** While some types of cases (e.g., homicide and high value burglaries) should be investigated regardless of the availability of leads, in general cases should not be investigated unless sufficient leads have been developed to create a reasonable likelihood the case can be solved. Nonetheless, most reported crime in Newport is assigned to an investigator. Investigating cases for which there is a miniscule likelihood the case will be solved, however, is not a good use of department resources.

To address these issues the department should revamp its case assignment practices. First, the department should cease handling cases involving bounced checks and delinquent video rentals. Business owners should retain collection agencies or use civil remedies to address these issues. Second, the department should establish a list of "solvability factors" and use these factors to determine what criminal cases should be assigned for follow-up investigation. To counteract community perceptions that the department "does not care" about their cases, the department can also consider establishing a simple process for asking citizens who have reported a crime – for which no leads have been identified – to report any additional information about the crime. In some cases, information that comes to light after an initial preliminary investigation has been concluded changes the assessment of a case's solvability and justifies a more active investigation of the case.

## **WORK FORCE MANAGEMENT**

### **Detective Managers Should Expect All Investigators To Achieve A Reasonable Level Of Productivity**

In recent years, the conduct of follow-up investigations of criminal cases has not been aggressively managed. Detectives are not encouraged to close cases, unproductive investigative strategies have been allowed to persist, and productivity expectations have not been established.

- **Non-existent case management.** Oversight of how detectives manage cases has been virtually non-existent in recent years. Indeed, during the course of this study it was found that no systems are in place to monitor the status of cases assigned by the captain to the detectives. For example, until data was being collected for analysis by the study team, the captain who oversees the detectives was unaware two detectives had not closed a significant portion of assigned cases.
- **Ineffective investigative strategies.** At present, one investigator is assigned responsibility for investigating cold cases. While on the surface investigating cold cases appears to be a reasonable strategy – especially for cases that now have the potential to be solved through the use of DNA evidence – this strategy has not proved effective in Newport. Indeed, during 2005 this investigator did not clear (that is, solve a case for which the perpetrator was arrested) a single case. Nonetheless, no effort has been made to assign this investigator to more productive activities.
- **Lack of productivity standards.** Given the lack of aggressive management it is not surprising that the productivity of department investigators varies considerably. Despite the fact that detectives are generally assigned the same types of cases some detectives have been much more productive (that is, are responsible for more arrests that result from investigative activity) than others. Indeed, over the past two years, the number of arrests resulting from investigative activity has ranged from a low of 22 to a high of 67.

To address this issue, the department must manage investigative activities much more aggressively. Progress on cases should be reviewed at regular intervals and at each status meeting a decision should be made as to whether continued investigation of the case will likely lead to a positive result. Cases for which continued investigation is

unlikely to be productive should be closed. In addition, expectations for the productivity of investigators – in terms of the number of cases they clear (that is, solve through arrest or exception<sup>10</sup>) and the number of these cases that are accepted for prosecution – should be set.<sup>11</sup> Investigators who do not achieve reasonably high levels of productivity should be reassigned.

## **PROSECUTION**

### **Staffing Of The Prosecution Unit Should Be Realigned**

The prosecution unit is currently staffed by a lieutenant and a sergeant. The lieutenant is assigned responsibility for managing department responsibilities related to the prosecution of cases at the superior court while the sergeant is responsible for department responsibilities related to prosecution of cases at district and municipal courts. Historically two sergeant positions were assigned to this unit but over the past several years the retired chief opted to reassign a lieutenant to the unit. The duties performed by the lieutenant do not require the skills, experience, and training of a lieutenant. In many departments a sergeant oversees the prosecution unit and staff support is provided by a detective. In fact, on weekends and when the current prosecution unit staff is unavailable, general investigations detectives handle prosecution responsibilities.

The prosecution unit should be led by a sergeant who will be responsible for superior, district and municipal court responsibilities. A detective position should be assigned to work with the sergeant to perform the department's court and prosecution-related responsibilities. The lieutenant position that staffs the prosecution unit should be discontinued.

## **ORGANIZATION**

### **A Sergeant Position Should Be Established To Lead The General Investigations Unit**

One reason the general investigations function has not been effectively managed is that the unit lacks a supervisor. While the other two large units in the criminal investigations division – prosecution and narcotics/vice – are both led by sergeants the seven detectives assigned to the general investigations unit currently report directly to the division captain.

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<sup>10</sup> The FBI allows a case to be reported as "cleared by exception" if the perpetrator has been identified but cannot be arrested due to factors outside the department's control (for example, the perpetrator has died or is in prison for another offense in another state).

<sup>11</sup> Even if a case is solved, if the prosecutor does not prosecute the perpetrator because an acceptable case file has not been presented this should not be considered a completely successful outcome. On the other hand, it is reasonable to track both case clearance and cases accepted for prosecution because, in some jurisdictions, prosecutors have established policies of not prosecuting some types of cases regardless of the quality of the case prepared by the investigator.

To address this shortcoming and provide the oversight needed to strengthen investigative performance, a sergeant position should be established. This position, however, will have a reasonably small span of control and should, therefore, be expected to devote approximately 60 percent of his or her time to investigating cases.

## **STAFFING**

### **Criminal Investigations Division Staffing Should Be Realigned**

As noted Chapter B2 discusses the need to increase the number of positions assigned to the narcotics/vice unit by two positions. These staffing increases should, however, be offset by a reduction in staffing of two positions. First, the investigative position focused on investigating cold cases should be eliminated. One additional position can also be eliminated if one assumes that all detectives should be at least 75 percent as productive as the most productive investigator. Please note, however, that this represents a conservative assessment of investigator staffing needs. Eliminating the investigation of bounced checks and delinquent video rentals, establishing reasonable criteria for what cases should be investigated based on solvability, and working with detectives to improve their productivity may make it possible to make further reductions in the staffing of the general investigation unit in the future.

## **C – INTERNAL AFFAIRS OFFICE AND INSPECTIONS DIVISION**

This subsection discusses the need to restore the credibility of the internal affairs office and whether continuing to participate in the CALEA accreditation process is warranted.

### **INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

#### **The Police Department's Internal Affairs Process Lacks Credibility**

Over the past several years the internal affairs process has been viewed as suspect by members of the department due, in large part, to allegations of interference and micro-management by the recently retired chief. In fact, a number of cases that involved complaints related to the chief or close friends and relatives of the chief were investigated by department staff when an outside investigation by the state police should have been requested. Community representatives share employee concerns about the internal affairs process. In interviews and focus groups a number of community members expressed significant concerns with the objectivity of this process.

#### **The Department Should Take Aggressive Action To Restore The Integrity Of The Internal Affairs Process**

Any effective police department needs an internal affairs process that is perceived by stakeholders from within and outside the police department as being fair and objective. It is, therefore, essential that the department work proactively to restore the integrity of the internal affairs process. In particular, specific criteria need to be established that detail what matters will be investigated internally, when someone other than the internal affairs investigator will perform an internal investigation, and when a complaint or incident will be referred to an external investigator, such as the state police, for investigation. At a minimum a non-department investigation should occur for any case that involves a complaint against the chief, the family members of the chief, or the

internal affairs investigator. In addition criteria for contacting citizens who make complaints and notifying citizens of the results of an investigation and their appeal rights should be reviewed and strengthened.

## **ACCREDITATION**

### **Given The Magnitude Of The Challenges Facing The Department CALEA Reaccreditation Should Not Pursued**

In the summer of 2005 the department received its initial CALEA certification. The department devoted significant staff and financial resources to prepare for the initial certification visit. In fact, in addition to the one officer who currently staffs the accreditation unit four additional positions were pulled from patrol duties to prepare for this visit. Ongoing efforts to maintain accreditation are also staff intensive. In addition to the one full-time officer who oversees accreditation, staff from across the department supports the effort. Individuals interviewed in patrol, investigations, records, emergency communications, internal affairs, crime scene investigations, and property/fleet report spending several hours per week managing CALEA documents and maintaining CALEA files. In addition the lieutenant who oversees the inspections unit reported spending 50 percent of his time on CALEA related activities and the training sergeant reported spending 25 percent of his time on CALEA activities.

Given the magnitude of the challenge the department faces in implementing the recommendations presented in this study and revitalizing department operations continuing to focus limited resources on CALEA accreditation seems ill advised. The department's limited resources are better used addressing the myriad challenges the department currently faces. Pursuing reaccreditation will divert attention and focus from critical activities that need to occur over the next several years. The officer position assigned to CALEA should therefore be discontinued.

Please note that the decision not to pursue reaccreditation is somewhat easier because the validity of the initial CALEA accreditation is highly suspect in the view of many officers. Indeed, in interviews many department staff reported the CALEA inspectors were not given a true picture of the state of the department. Many employees reported that during the CALEA inspection equipment and vehicles were moved to the city yard so that they would be "hidden" from the inspectors. In addition, policies and procedures were developed and shared with inspectors that staff admitted had never been and never would be implemented by the department.

## **D – ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION**

This section is divided into two parts: records unit, and research and development office. A detailed discussion of issues related to emergency communications and information technology, which are also a part of this division, is presented in Chapter D1.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Chapter D1 is titled "Issues Affecting Both The Police And Fire Departments."

## **RECORDS UNIT**

### **The Records Unit Should Be Renamed The Records And Payroll Unit**

The records unit is responsible for all department records functions and also provides payroll support to the department. The unit's name should be changed from the "records unit" to the "records and payroll unit" to more accurately reflect the range of services the unit performs.

### **One Senior Records Clerk Position Should Be Upgraded To Unit Supervisor**

At present, the title and level of one of the senior records clerk positions does not match her job responsibilities. The incumbent in this position is currently charged with supervising the unit, managing payroll and attendance activities, and serving as the department's liaison to the city's human resources department on issues relating to leave, benefits, and salary. The title of this position is inappropriate not only because it does not reflect the breadth of the incumbent's responsibilities but more importantly because senior records clerk is a non-supervisory position title and the incumbent performs supervisory duties. In addition, the position's title is confusing because the incumbent is charged with supervising another position with the same title. To address this problem, one senior records clerk position should be upgraded to a unit supervisor position.

### **The Role Of One Senior Records Clerk Position Should Be Changed**

Currently one of the senior records clerk positions is responsible for reviewing officers' reports. This clerk often makes corrections to these reports when errors are found. While this clerk should be commended for her initiative, responsibility for reviewing patrol reports and ensuring they are corrected is an important supervisory function and should be assigned to patrol sergeants. In addition, it is extremely important that when an error in a report is discovered the report be corrected by the patrol officer not a clerical employee in the records unit. Reassigning responsibility for reviewing reports to patrol sergeants will free the senior records clerk to perform other needed department functions. In particular, responsibility for scheduling, managing, and documenting off duty employment should be assigned to this senior records clerk.

### **The Records Unit Could Provide Better Customer Service If The Front Desk Were Renovated And An Additional Customer Service Window Added**

The staff assigned to the records unit, which is located on the first floor of headquarters behind safety glass, performs a number of important services for citizens who come to the department seeking assistance. In particular, records staff take reports, provide copies of reports, run records checks, serve as the receptionists for headquarters, and answer questions from visitors. (Because the headquarters is located on the main thoroughfare into downtown Newport visitors frequently walk into the headquarters to get directions or ask questions.) At present, however, only one window is available to serve citizens and during most day time and early evening hours one window is not sufficient to provide prompt customer service. It is not uncommon for citizens to have to wait in line to receive service even when clerks are available to serve them simply because there is not another service window. To address this problem, the customer service

area in records should be renovated and an additional customer service window should be added.

## **RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE**

### **The Unit Should Re-Establish Its Emphasis On Grant Development**

A manager and an assistant have historically staffed the research and development office. The scope of responsibility of this office had expanded over the past ten years as the former manager of that office (the current city manager) led the unit for over twenty-five years and was seen as a highly skilled administrator. The unit not only had broad responsibility within the department for budget development and management, fund development through the pursuit of federal and state grants, and grants management but also the previous manager had overseen information technology, emergency communications, and records. During this manager's tenure the police department aggressively pursued state and federal grants that were tied to the department's priority initiatives. His work in successful grant development resulted in the department being able to upgrade its equipment and technology with minimal costs to the citizens of Newport.

For the past year the manager and assistant to the manager positions assigned to this office have been vacant. While the captain – administrative services has assumed many of the responsibilities previously performed by these positions, some responsibilities – most notably grant development – have received little attention. Consequently, the department's ability to supplement its resources from outside sources has been significantly reduced.

Given the budget constraints faced by the city of Newport, it is critical that the department renew the aggressive pursuit of grant funding. In addition to pursuing state and federal grants, opportunities to obtain foundation funding for initiatives that are aligned with department priorities should be actively pursued.

### **The Office's Role Should Also be Expanded To Include Budgeting And Planning**

At the same time the office renews its emphasis on obtaining grant funding, it should also expand its role with regard to budgeting and planning. Indeed, planning and budgeting will become increasingly important as the department works to establish the management systems and processes needed to revitalize the organization. In particular, as the department engages in both operational and strategic planning the need to link budget resources with department priorities will be critical. The department's planning process should guide both local budget development and grant development efforts as the police department utilizes available local resources and pursues external resources to support its priority goals.<sup>13</sup>

To reflect its new role – and its importance to the department's success – the office should be renamed the planning and budget office. It should be led by a civilian manager – planning and budget, who should be responsible for working with command staff to develop the resources needed to address department priorities and should

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<sup>13</sup> For example, if training is determined to be a high priority then development efforts should focus on pursuing grants to support increased training.

reinvigorate its aggressive pursuit of grant funds that align with its priorities. The manager should also support the administrative services director in managing the department's budget, in ensuring city resources are used as effectively as possible, and that all grant related conditions and timelines are met. The assistant manager position should be discontinued, as the manager will no longer be responsible for supervising emergency communications, records, and information technology.